REAL SIMPLE

LIFE MADE EASIER

90+ PAGES OF INSPIRATION & IDEAS

More Calm, Less Clutter

Pro Tips to Stay Organized All Year

11 Easy Ways to Get Fitter & Happier

Delicious (& Healthy!) Weeknight Meals

Meet Your Money Goals

JANUARY 2018

Thoughts

“There are better things ahead than any we leave behind.”

—C.S. LEWIS, in a letter to Mary Willis Shelburne

CAVAN IMAGES/OFFSET

30
25
20
15
10
30
25
20
15
10
DAY ONE OF RETIREMENT

PREPARED FOR A LONGER RETIREMENT?

THE EXPERIMENT THAT GOT COUPLES TALKING.

We’re living longer, which is great. But it means we could be underestimating how much money we’ll need in retirement. The bigger concern? Most of us aren’t talking about it.

So we invited couples to guess how much money they’ll need in retirement using our interactive walkway. It turned out that most couples weren’t on the same page and fell short of the average length of retirement. They walked away from our experiment with an important new perspective—because we’re living longer, we need to start planning for longer. A good place to start? Planning for income that lasts all our years in retirement.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO PRUDENTIAL.COM.

RETIREMENT | INVESTMENTS | INSURANCE

Prudential
Bring Your Challenges®

© 2017 PRUDENTIAL FINANCIAL, INC., NEWARK, NJ, USA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
0309529-00001-00

Editor's Note

Follow me on Twitter @lyazel and Instagram @leslieyazel

LOOK, I MAKE resolutions each January—I know it's cliché, and I just don't care—and as usual this year's goals are all over the map. Some are big and practical: We've got to renovate the kitchen, with its too-dark cabinets and refrigerator-door rubber seal that tears a bit more with each opening. Some are heartfelt: I'd like to be a better listener and offer my full focus to my husband and my daughter more often than I do now. Some are about home sanity: I want the walk-in utility closet to look like it did the day after the nice fellow from the Container Store installed the shelving system.

In fact, getting organized is the top resolution readers tell us they make (and sometimes break). This month, we bring you 10 pages of room-by-room organization tips, starting on page 86. And I know what you may be thinking: "I can get my home totally organized. I just can't *keep* it that way." I hear you—that's why we've included strategies to maintain that finely organized feel throughout the whole year. Some of this comes down to not taking it all on yourself: We reveal proven ways to enlist your family crew to be a part of the solution.

Some years, resolution-making is more complicated. I've had times in which I felt dissatisfied and wanted to make life changes, but I wasn't exactly sure of my goal and the steps to get there. Which is why I was drawn to what author and coach Stacy Kim calls the Lighthouse Method (page 110). The idea is to just start making small changes, which gets you in a good frame of mind for trying new things. You see your life from a different perspective as you move toward your goal (the lighthouse) in the distance.

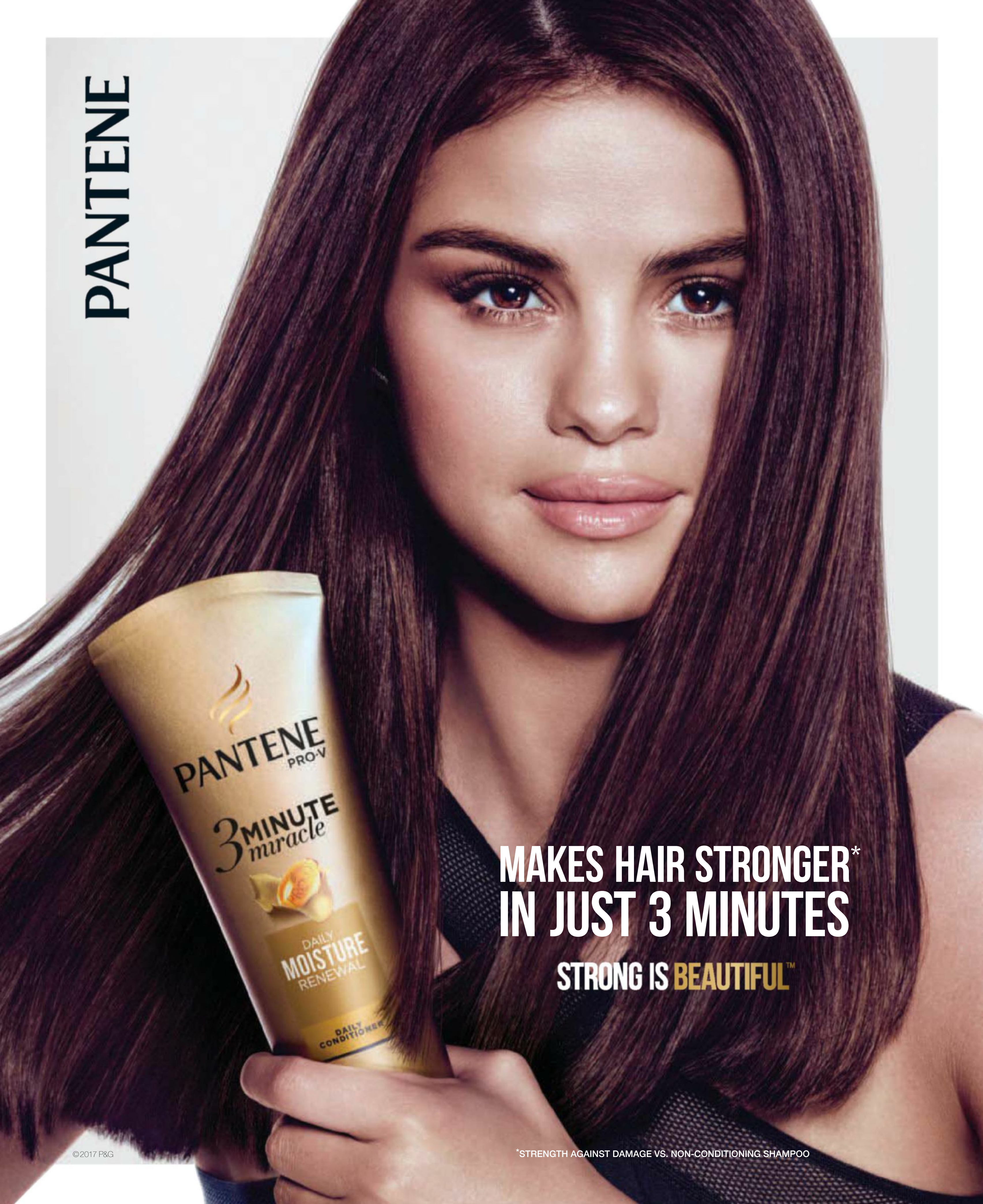
Whatever your January goals are—putting your finances in order, getting healthier, streamlining your morning routine, connecting with friends and family—I hope you'll find inspiration in these pages. And I wish you luck with your new year's plans. I'll be here, praying this refrigerator door doesn't give out on me before I get mine underway!

Leslie Yazel

HOW'S YOUR CLOSET?
My closet was kind of a hot mess until Alyssa Dineen, one of our experts in "A Better Way to Buy Clothes" (page 48), helped me say farewell to items I wasn't wearing and identified pieces that made pulling together an outfit in the morning a total breeze. Example: The top Alyssa is zipping me into at the boutique Bird in Brooklyn (above) goes with 80 percent of the skirts and pants I own.

FASHION STYLING BY ALYSSA DINEEN; HAIR BY MATTHEW MONZON; MAKEUP BY KATIE JANE HUGHES.
TOP RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSICA ANTOLA; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY MEL PALDINO WITH NARS FOR ENNIS INC.

Photograph by Rob Howard


PANTENE
PANTENE PRO-V
3 MINUTE miracle
DAILY MOISTURE RENEWAL
DAILY CONDITIONER
MAKES HAIR STRONGER*
IN JUST 3 MINUTES
STRONG IS BEAUTIFUL™
*STRENGTH AGAINST DAMAGE VS. NON-CONDITIONING SHAMPOO
©2017 P&G

Contents

January 2018

86

Clear the mess (finally!)

ON THE COVER

More calm, less clutter: pro tips to stay organized all year....86

11 easy ways to get fitter and happier....81

Delicious (and healthy!) weeknight meals....96, 117

Meet your money goals....75

96

Hearty winter salads

104

Fuss-free beauty

110

Navigating toward your dreams

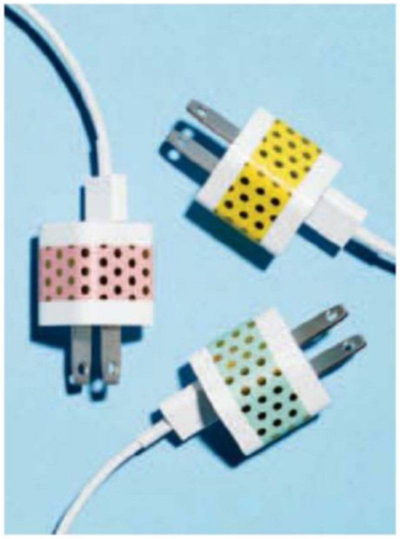
COVER CREDITS

Cover Photograph by Christopher Testani

Prop Styling by Kira Corbin

127
Freeze-and-bake cookies

34
The makeup trick to look awake



25
Repurpose everyday items

Thoughts 4
Editor's Note 6
Real Simple 24/7 10
Your Words 12
The Short List 14

what we love

Seven things to do, see, and enjoy this month 17
Pretty Smart Beauty buys to save your sanity 20
New Uses for... Cord control 25
Little Helpers Clever items that make every day better 26
The Staple Corn tortillas 27

the realist

How to Care for Your Sweaters 29
Things Cooks Know Grocery store hacks 30
Now What?!? Solutions for life's mini disasters 32
Pretty Practical Perk up your eyes with white liner 34
Road Test Our editors pick the best hand sanitizers 37
Design by Destination Decor finds from around the globe 38
Real Simplifier How to get what you want from customer service 42
Organize This Control laundry room chaos 44
A Better Way to Buy Clothes Need a closet overhaul? Help is out there 48
Personal Shopper Style blogger Caroline Rector's budget-friendly winter picks 52

relating

5 Skills It's Never Too Late to Learn 55
Good Read Steve Friedman goes in search of ways to channel his middle-age angst 59
Modern Manners Catherine Newman offers advice 62
The Vets Will See You Now Pet problems, solved 64
Your Sick Day Survival Guide Coping when your kid is under the weather 67

balance

Yes, You Can Pull Off a Sabbatical An extended break from work is within reach—follow these tips 71
Give Yourself a Money Checkup Six numbers that reveal your financial health 75
Making It Work What's your resolution for achieving work-life balance? 78
Get Organized for Better Health Set up your space to eat right, exercise, and reduce stress 81
Ahhh Take a breather 85

features

Project Declutter Our whole-family plan to conquer the cleaning for good 86
A Green Winter Comforting in-season salads 96
Do Just One Thing A single, high-impact beauty step can transform your routine 104
How to Make a Big Change (When You Aren't Sure What You Want) A life coach shares her method 110

food

5 Easy Dinners 117
Make It Yourself Chai tea concentrate 123
Road Test Ready-to-serve soups 126
Big Batch Kitchen sink cookies 127

The Struggle Is Real 130

REAL SIMPLE® (ISSN 1528-1701) IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY TIME INC. PRINCIPAL OFFICE: 225 LIBERTY STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10281. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY, AND ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. POSTMASTER: SEND ALL UAA TO CFS (SEE DMM 507.1.5.2); NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: SEND ADDRESS CORRECTIONS TO REAL SIMPLE MAGAZINE, P.O. BOX 62120, TAMPA, FL 33662-2120. CANADA POST PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40110178. RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADA ADDRESSES TO: POSTAL STN. A, P.O. BOX 4015, TORONTO, ON M5W 2T2. GST#888381621RT0001. SUBSCRIBERS: IF THE POSTAL SERVICE ALERTS US THAT YOUR MAGAZINE IS UNDELIVERABLE, WE HAVE NO FURTHER OBLIGATION UNLESS WE RECEIVE A CORRECTED ADDRESS WITHIN TWO YEARS. U.S. SUBSCRIPTIONS: $28.95 FOR ONE YEAR. YOUR BANK MAY PROVIDE UPDATES TO THE CARD INFORMATION WE HAVE ON FILE. YOU MAY OPT OUT OF THIS SERVICE AT ANY TIME. MAILING LIST: WE MAKE A PORTION OF OUR MAILING LIST AVAILABLE TO REPUTABLE FIRMS. CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SUBSCRIPTIONS: FOR 24/7 SERVICE, PLEASE USE OUR WEBSITE, REALSIMPLE.COM/CUSTOMERSERVICE. YOU CAN ALSO CALL 1-800-881-1172 OR WRITE TO REAL SIMPLE AT P.O. BOX 62120, TAMPA, FL 33662-2120. © 2017 TIME INC. FOR INTERNATIONAL LICENSING AND SYNDICATION REQUESTS, PLEASE VISIT HTTP://WWW.TIMEINC.COM/SYNDICATION OR CALL 1-212-522-5868. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED. REAL SIMPLE® IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF TIME INC. VOLUME 19, ISSUE 1. PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

Real Simple 24/7

FOLLOW US ONLINE FOR EXCLUSIVE IDEAS, TIPS, AND WAYS TO MAKE LIFE EASIER—EVERY DAY.

MEET

JERRY LEU

VIDEO DIRECTOR AT
REALSIMPLE.COM

Favorite *Real Simple* video I've worked on: Our "creative lunch boxes" video. While doing stop-motion is tricky, watching it all come together at the end is immensely satisfying.

New Year's resolution: Does getting a dog count? I'll go with that because it means getting different parts of my life in order first.

Dream trip: Eating my way through the whole country of Japan.

@JLEUWHO
ON INSTAGRAM

Breakfast on the go

Drop the doughnut and opt for homemade granola bars. Make these ahead and you're set for a week of busy mornings.

Visit realsimple.com/granolabars for the recipes.

AT-HOME WORKOUT

If your resolution is to hit the gym more often, you may not even need to leave your house. Try these five yoga poses to help increase flexibility and relieve stress.

Watch the video at realsimple.com/yoga.

ON INSTAGRAM?

We are, too! Follow us to get recipe, decor, beauty, and fashion inspiration. Plus, get a behind-the-scenes look at upcoming issues. Share your photos using #realsimple for a chance to be featured.

Cleaner every day

Keep your space tidy in 2018: We'll give you small cleaning tricks for every day in January.

Check out realsimple.com/cleaningcalendar.

Open P and tap 📷 for ideas.

PINTEREST
@REALSIMPLE

TWITTER
@REALSIMPLE

SNAPCHAT
@REALSIMPLEMAG

FACEBOOK
@REALSIMPLE

INSTAGRAM
@REAL_SIMPLE

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF JERRY LEU; GRACE ELKUS; COURTESY OF REALSIMPLE.COM; VAST PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES

THE INVIGORATING POWER OF A YUZU LEMON MASK
[SMOOTHS ROUGH SKIN AND EVENS TONE]

NEW
PURE CLAY
MASK

YUZU LEMON + 3 PURE CLAYS

FORMULA WITH YUZU LEMON CLARIFIES
EXFOLIATING PARTICLES SMOOTH
TRANSFORM SKIN IN JUST 10 MINUTES

L'ORÉAL
PARiS

Worth It Rewards **Earn rewards:** Join now at lorealparisusa.com/worthitrewards

BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT.™ ©2018 L'Oréal USA, INC.

Your Words

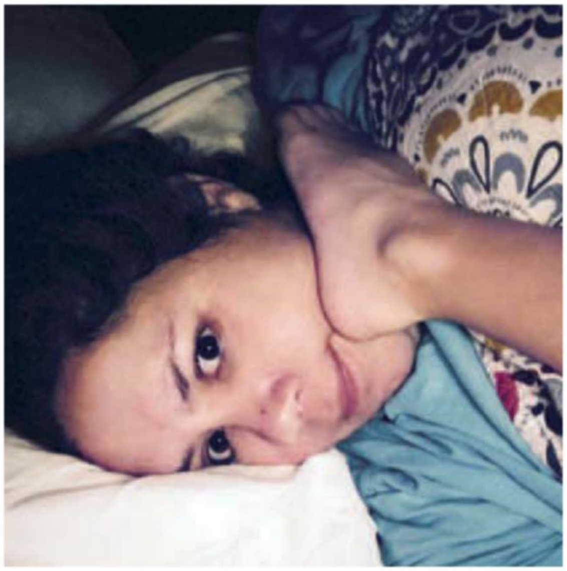
What is your go-to small-talk topic?

I like to ask people what their first concert was.

This is a great conversation starter you can ask anyone. And answers are guaranteed to lead to a good story.

ROBIE LEONARDI, CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA

#WOMENIRL “WHEN YOU WAKE UP TO YOUR FIVE-YEAR-OLD’S FOOT IN YOUR FACE.” @TINASPERRY



My go-to is always a compliment! I choose something to compliment a person on and take the conversation from there. This breaks the ice on a positive note and leaves the conversation open for the person to take it wherever they feel comfortable.

MEGAN D., HOPEWELL, NEW JERSEY

“How do you spend your days?” This is a much nicer way to learn about someone than asking what they do, and it gives them so much more room to talk about their hobbies, interests, and family.

RACHEL LEAH ROPP, NEW ORLEANS

I ask everyone, regardless of age or gender, “So what are you reading these days?” There’s no easier way to peek into a person’s personality and find out if we have a connection.

CAREN McLANE, BILLINGS, MONTANA

“If you could eat only one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?” (Mine is tacos!)

KIMBERLY BEACH, SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

“What are you binge-watching on TV?” With Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon, there is a wealth of quality programming out there, and word of mouth is the main way I’ve found my favorites.

TERRI HUSETH, SHAWNEE, KANSAS

Ask what their favorite dessert was as a kid and what it is now. Inevitably people start sharing stories, and before you know it, everyone is laughing.

ERIKA TIEDEMANN, TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA

I like asking, “What’s the best place to eat around here?” No matter where I am, it’s helpful to know and fun to talk about!

@SOCIALLYFOX

“How do you know the host/bride/groom?” It’s a great way to gain a new perspective on your friend and provides an opportunity to ask another question.

JOANNE ALLEN-WALKER, BENICIA, CALIFORNIA

Pets! People love to chat about their pets.

NANCY MARROQUIN, PORT CHARLOTTE, FLORIDA

Travel and experiences. I ask, "Do you have an upcoming trip or activity that you're excited about?" I find everyone always has something to say in response, I get to learn a lot about them, and it usually stimulates further interesting conversation.

JAZMIN MARSHALL, SEATTLE

The women who shared the photos in this column will receive our book *Dinner Made Simple*. Want to be considered for this column? Tag photos on Instagram with #WOMENIRL.

On my way home on the subway, I like to ask the person next to me how their day went. Sharing something nice with a total stranger makes me feel human again.

RICCI BRIGANTI, NEW YORK CITY

I like to ask, "If you could have a superpower, what would it be, and why?"

AMANDA NOELLE ANGEL, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

The weather. It's unpredictable, so there is always something to talk about.

KATIE FOSTER, SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

I find small talk difficult, so my go-to topic is the latest crazy story I have about my puppy, Sandy. Laughing is a great icebreaker!

@AMRDALESSANDRO

I like to ask about the best meal they've ever eaten. I love food, and I assume everyone else does, too!

@MYMANQUOTED

When I'm meeting new couples, I ask them how they met. There's always a good story involved, and it gives me a real feeling of getting to know them.

PATTY DeLOACH, CRAWFORDVILLE, FLORIDA

I have learned a lot about people from asking how their parents came up with their name. It's amazing the way some people ended up with theirs. Although many are family names or picked from a baby book, there are some really interesting stories to be heard. My favorite story was about a girl whose parents were meteorologists. Her name was Faren Hight.

TAMI FARMER, ROME, GEORGIA

#WOMENIRL "WHO NEEDS CREAMER WHEN YOU CAN HAVE A HOT WHEELS CAR DROPPED IN YOUR COFFEE INSTEAD?" #TODDLERLIFE @DESIRAERANDALL

NEXT QUESTION...

What's the family rule that keeps your household running smoothly?

Send an email to **yourwords@ realsimple.com** and let us know your answer to this question. Your response could appear on these pages.

I live in New Mexico, so to start a conversation, I often ask, "Did you see that sunset last night?"

MAGGIE C. REYNOLDS, LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

The Short List

FIVE BOOKS THAT WON'T DISAPPOINT

By Nora Horvath

Damn good nonfiction

We may consider vulgar language taboo, but curse words actually have surprising benefits. In *Swearing Is Good for You,* Emma Byrne unearths an unorthodox body of research to reveal how swearing helps reduce pain and anxiety and can even bring people together. This fascinating debut is perfect for fans of Mary Roach.

True(ish) tales of Hollywood

Melanie Benjamin (*The Aviator's Wife*) returns with a new novel based on the real-life friendship of screenwriter Frances Marion and actress Mary Pickford in the early 1900s. In an industry dominated by men, the women support each other in their rise to fame until a disagreement puts their bond in jeopardy. Full of Old Hollywood glamour and true details about the pair's historic careers, *The Girls in the Picture* is a captivating ode to a legendary bond.

Corporate comedy

In Jillian Medoff's uplifting and hilarious novel *This Could Hurt,* readers meet Rosa Guerrero, longtime head of human resources at a top company. As Guerrero navigates office drama, love affairs, and her own personal ambitions in the face of corporate cutbacks, Medoff examines the impact our work-life decisions have on our home lives.

The next big thriller

Grappling with crippling agoraphobia, Anna Fox spends her days watching classic films, popping pills, and guzzling wine in her New York City apartment. When she witnesses a terrible crime through her window, she struggles to piece together what is real. *The Woman in the Window,* A.J. Finn's Hitchcockian debut, explores both Anna's inner demons and the ones acting right in front of her eyes.

Great for book club

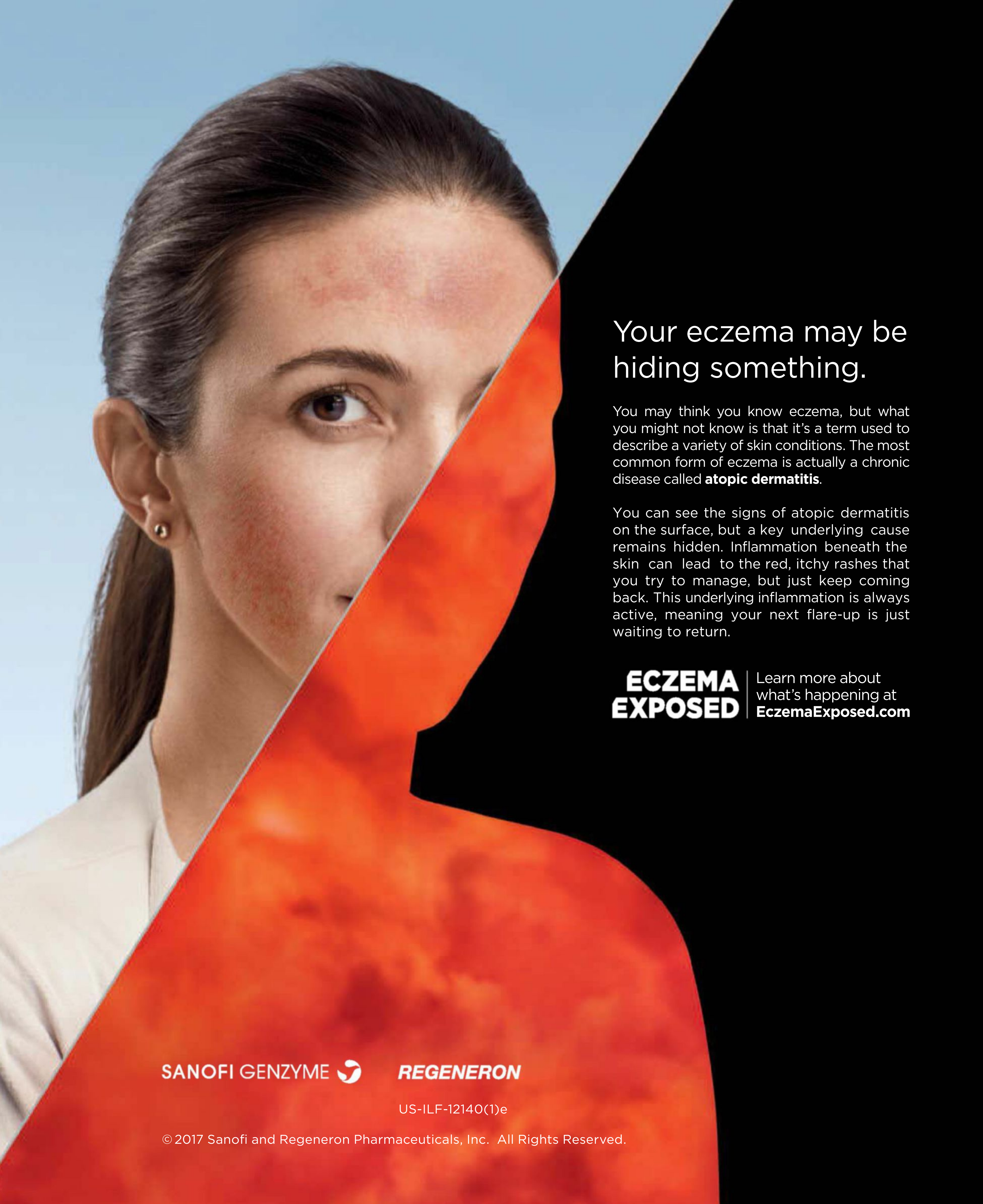
In *Everything Here Is Beautiful,* Mira T. Lee explores the relationship between two sisters: elder Miranda, who has always been the responsible one, and free-spirited Lucia, who struggles with schizophrenia. This gorgeous yet heartbreaking debut follows Miranda's and Lucia's lives after their mother's death and sheds light on the sacrifices people make for loved ones with mental illness.

For more book recommendations, visit **realsimple.com/books.**

Emma Byrne
Swearing Is Good for You
THE AMAZING SCIENCE OF BAD LANGUAGE
THE GIRLS IN THE PICTURE
MELANIE BENJAMIN
THIS COULD HURT
JILLIAN MEDOFF
A. J. Finn
the woman in the window
MIRA T. LEE
EVERYTHING HERE IS BEAUTIFUL

Photograph by Addie Juell

PROP STYLING BY CECILIA ELGUERO



Your eczema may be hiding something.

You may think you know eczema, but what you might not know is that it's a term used to describe a variety of skin conditions. The most common form of eczema is actually a chronic disease called **atopic dermatitis**.

You can see the signs of atopic dermatitis on the surface, but a key underlying cause remains hidden. Inflammation beneath the skin can lead to the red, itchy rashes that you try to manage, but just keep coming back. This underlying inflammation is always active, meaning your next flare-up is just waiting to return.

ECZEMA EXPOSED | Learn more about what's happening at **EczemaExposed.com**

SANOFI GENZYME REGENERON

US-ILF-12140(1)e

© 2017 Sanofi and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

THOSE PUMPS

WON'T PAY FOR THEMSELVES.

Switch to GEICO and save money for the things you love.

Maybe it's those Parisian pumps you just had to own. Or that oh-so-amazing handbag. Fashion is what you love – and it doesn't come cheap. So switch to GEICO, because you could save 15% or more on car insurance. And that would help make the things you love that much easier to get.

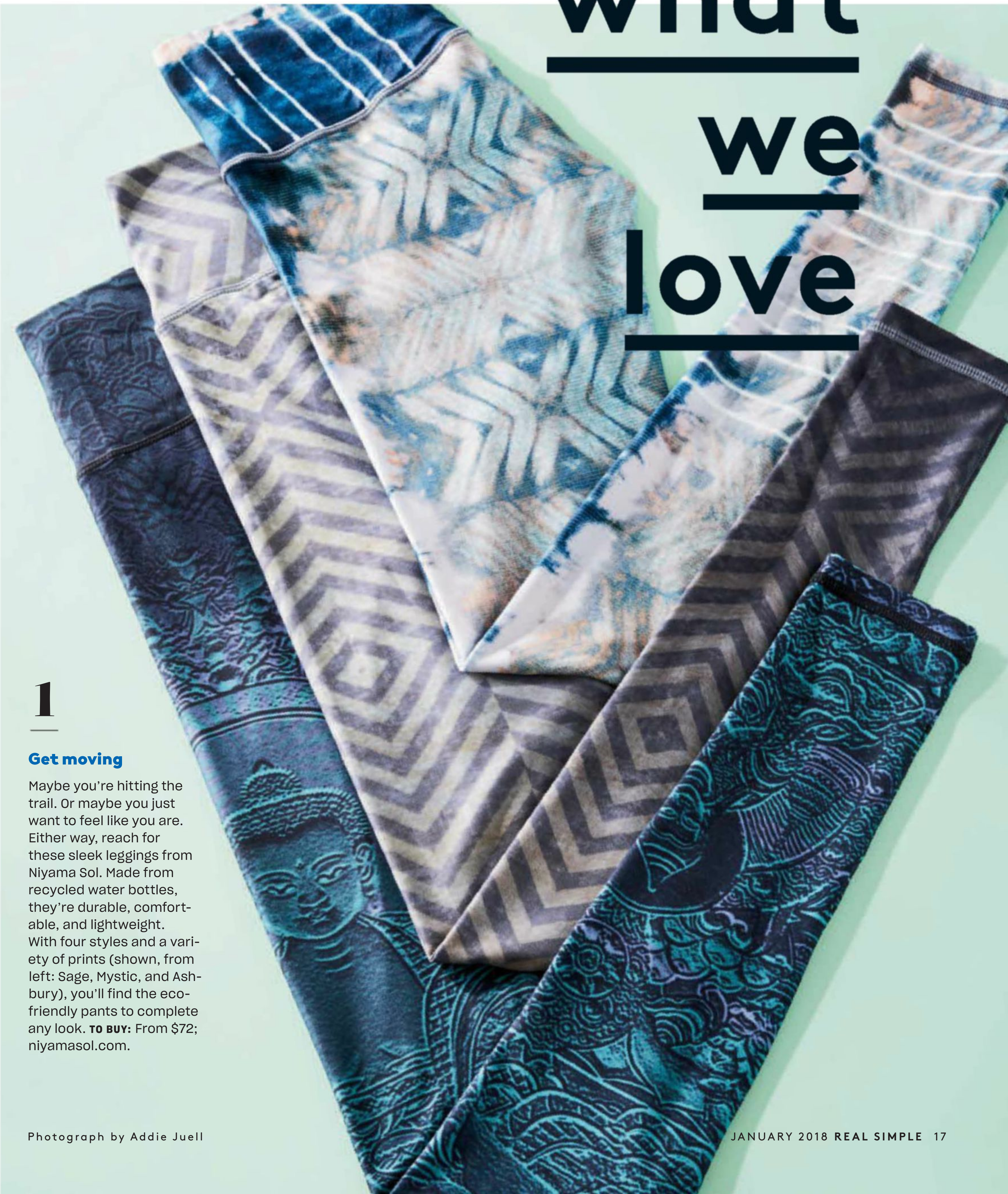
GEICO®

Auto • Home • Rent • Cycle • Boat

geico.com | 1-800-947-AUTO (2886) | local office

Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states or all GEICO companies. Homeowners and renters coverages are written through non-affiliated insurance companies and are secured through the GEICO Insurance Agency, Inc. Boat and PWC coverages are underwritten by GEICO Marine Insurance Company. Motorcycle and ATV coverages are underwritten by GEICO Indemnity Company. GEICO is a registered service mark of Government Employees Insurance Company, Washington, D.C. 20076; a Berkshire Hathaway Inc. subsidiary. © 2017 GEICO

what we love



1

Get moving

Maybe you're hitting the trail. Or maybe you just want to feel like you are. Either way, reach for these sleek leggings from Niyama Sol. Made from recycled water bottles, they're durable, comfortable, and lightweight. With four styles and a variety of prints (shown, from left: Sage, Mystic, and Ashbury), you'll find the eco-friendly pants to complete any look. **TO BUY:** From $72; niyamasol.com.

PROP STYLING BY CECILIA ELGUERO

Photograph by Addie Juell

more to love

2

Find relief

From hurricanes to wildfires, disasters often inspire an inclination to donate. But finding the best organization to receive your donation isn't always simple. Thanks to Charity Navigator's Hot Topics, you can click on a crisis and see the verified charities contributing to the cause. Find them on Facebook or go to charitynavigator.org.

Healthyish

3

Enjoy eating

Take the hassle out of healthy eating with this new release from expert recipe developer Lindsay Maitland Hunt. A guilt-free guide to nutrition, *Healthyish* emboldens you to dine on indulgences like shakes and cookies while also showing you how to spice up your salad. Each recipe is fit for both the cooking-averse and pros. Available January 9. **TO BUY:** $30; amazon.com.

4

Feel enthralled

Taking us back to the 1970s, *The Post* tells the story behind the release of the Pentagon Papers. This can't-miss film, directed by Steven Spielberg, stars Meryl Streep as trailblazing publisher Katharine Graham and Tom Hanks as editor Ben Bradlee. See it in theaters January 12.

we are knitters
ALL THE HAPPINESS IN A KIT
THE WOOL

5

Get cozy

Zen out on winter nights with a knitting, crochet, or petit point kit from We Are Knitters. Each set contains yarn (some made from reused fabric) and comes in four levels, from beginner to advanced, to match your experience. You pick the design. Many of the beginner- and easy-level kits take 3 to 10 hours to complete. **TO BUY:** From $39; weareknitters.com.

6

Be efficient

Spend less time—and use less water—with Fast-Rinse Conditioner from Love Beauty and Planet. New from Unilever, the line also includes shampoo, body wash, and more, in scents like lavender and rose. **TO BUY:** $9; lovebeautyplanet.com.

love beauty and planet

7

Tune in

The Light of Day Foundation is rocking out to raise money and awareness to defeat Parkinson's disease. Its annual fundraising festival, now in its 18th year, is a 10-day concert with more than 150 acts performing in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania from January 5 to 15. For more information, visit lightofday.org.

THE POST, COURTESY OF NIKO TAVERNISE; PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

THE SKINNY NUT

Go ahead, indulge a little with The Wonderful Nut. Wonderful Pistachios are one of the lowest-fat, lowest-calorie nuts around. This delicious, heart-healthy snack is one lean, green protein machine.

The Skinny Nut • The Fit Nut • The Mindful Nut • The Colorful Nut • The Happy Nut

Wonderful®
PISTACHIOS
The Wonderful Nut

Scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of most nuts, such as pistachios, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease. See nutrition information for fat content. © 2017 Wonderful Pistachios & Almonds LLC. All Rights Reserved. WONDERFUL, THE SKINNY NUT, the Package Design and accompanying logos are trademarks of Wonderful Pistachios & Almonds LLC or its affiliates. WP170913-13

surratt
surratt
surratt
surratt
surratt

Pretty Smart

NONSTICKY LIP GLOSS AND SEVEN OTHER BEAUTY BUYS TO SAVE YOUR SANITY

By Heather Muir Maffei

SURRATT BEAUTY LIP LUSTRE

Finally, a lip gloss for grown-ups! The moisturizing formula imparts a sophisticated shimmer (no goop or glitter chunks) that looks pretty whether worn alone or over lipstick. One swipe offers a veil; a few layers look holographic. Both wear comfortably and last. **TO BUY:** $32; sephora.com.

PROP STYLING BY CECILIA ELGUERO

Photograph by Addie Juell

IT COSMETICS MIRACLE WATER 3-IN-1 GLOW TONIC

The next-generation toner, this multi-tasker gently removes makeup, brightens skin, and helps your moisturizer work better. **TO BUY:** $38; itcosmetics.com.

it
MIRACLE WATER
ANTI-AGING
3-in-1 Glow Tonic
Skin-Brightening Radiance Booster
Anti-Aging Treatment Essence
Skin-Softening Micellar Cleanser
WITH PLASTIC SURGEONS
CLINICAL RESULTS

GO SMILE STAIN ERASERS

Pop these tiny, single-use teeth-whitening ampoules into your bag for touch-ups after drinking coffee or wine. Squeeze the tube to saturate the stick, then rub over teeth to prevent stains and freshen breath. **TO BUY:** $14 for 14; gosmile.com.

GO SMILE
GO SMILE

REVLON COLORSTAY EXACTIFY LIQUID EYELINER

Does eyeliner intimidate you? (Even we beauty editors feel that way.) This mini-pizza-cutter roller tip creates a thin, straight line for you—no steady hand needed. Praise hands! **TO BUY:** $12; revlon.com.

REVLON
COLORSTAY
EXACTIFY
LIQUID LINER

EVO WATER KILLER BRUNETTE DRY SHAMPOO

This formula does double duty: It sops up greasy roots (skip a shampoo even after working out) and covers grays and thin spots, thanks to its shiny brown finish. **TO BUY:** $36; evohair.com.

water killer
dry shampoo
shampooing sec
brunette/brune
evo

KAIA NATURALS THE TAKESUMI DETOX DEODORANT BAR BOOSTER

Created for your armpits, this bar (made with charcoal and apple cider vinegar) removes odor-causing bacteria so natural deodorant works better. **TO BUY:** $22; kaianaturals.com.

SUPERGOOP UNSEEN SUNSCREEN SPF 40

With this clear gel, wearing sunscreen every day doesn't feel like a chore. No white cast or oily residue, and it protects against UVA, UVB, blue light, and infrared rays—so your skin has invisible armor. **TO BUY:** $34; supergoop.com.

UNSEEN
SUNSCREEN
BROAD SPECTRUM
SPF 40
Supergoop!

R+CO CROWN SCALP SCRUB

A facial for your scalp. This salicylic acid and clay scrub removes product buildup for a hair reset. Massage a walnut-size drop into wet hair, rinse, then condition. **TO BUY:** $38; randco.com.

R+Co
CROWN
SCALP SCRUB
EXFOLIANT POUR CUIR CHEVELU

SMEARS, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: BRIAN HENN, PHILIP FRIEDMAN, NICHOLAS DUERS; PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

Getting organized never looked so good.

Get the Cozi mobile app & get $15 to spend on personalized planners, calendars and more at erincondren.com!*

cozi styled by erin condren

Start the new year with the #1 family organizing app, now with a signature Erin Condren look. It's free, easy to use, and includes:

- Shared calendar
- Reminders
- Grocery List & To Dos
- Access from any mobile device, tablet or computer

Get Cozi for free at cozi.com

*To receive the $15 offer, visit cozi.com or install the Cozi mobile app and create a new Cozi account. Offer ends 01/15/2018 at 11:59:00 PM PT and is available to first time Erin Condren customers only.

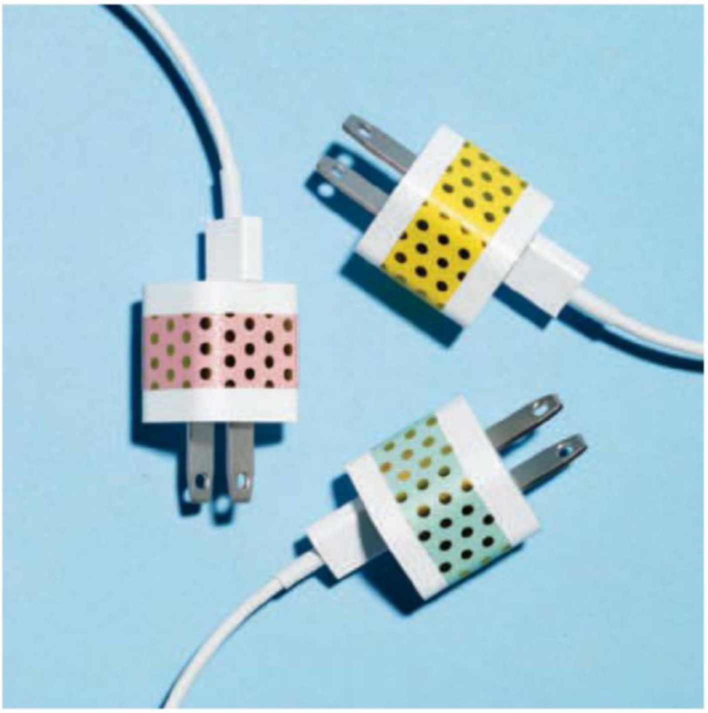
New Uses for...

Cord Control

WHO KNEW EVERYDAY ITEMS COULD SOLVE THIS ONE? THESE FOUR EASY HACKS BRING ORDER TO YOUR JUMBLE.

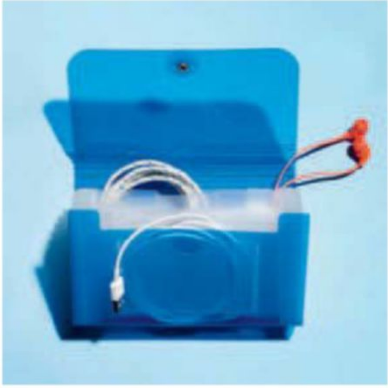
By Brandi Broxson

CHARGER MARKER
End the "Whose charger is this?" confusion by wrapping different-colored washi tape around the base for each family member.



EARBUDS TO GO
Keep earbuds from getting tangled or damaged while in transit by storing them in an eyeglass case.

COMPACT STORAGE
Corral little chargers and wires with a receipt accordion folder. Extra credit: Label the file tabs with the appliance the cord belongs to.



CORD HQ
An ornament storage box is perfect for organizing lots of cords in one place. Secure each with a twist tie to keep things neat.

Messy work space? For ingenious tidying tips, visit **realsimple.com/desk.**

PROP STYLING BY KATJA GREEFF; POLKA DOT WASHI TAPE, $13 FOR 3: PAPERSOURCE.COM

Photographs by Aaron Cameron Muntz

Little Helpers

SIX SMART PRODUCTS TO MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER

By Brandi Broxson

STAYS-HOT BEVERAGE BOTTLE

Keep coffee piping hot for eight hours or water cold for 36 with this triple-insulated mug. It includes a removable strainer basket for loose tea—or for keeping ice from knocking your teeth midswig. **TO BUY:** EcoVessel Perk bottle (29 oz.), $27; ecovessel.com.

BIB + APRON

Soft and stain resistant, this smock fits kids from sizes 6M to 3T. It ties in back so tots can't wiggle out, and it's waterproof so you can rinse it clean. **TO BUY:** Toddler Bapron, $20; bapronbaby.com.

ERGONOMIC ZESTER

This plastic orb fits in the palm of your hand and features a channel knife to turn rind into ribbons. Even better, it collects the bits of citrus while you zest, for less mess. **TO BUY:** Chef'n PalmZester, $8; chefn.com.

STRAINING TONGS

Set this slotted silicone tool by an ice bucket for easy serving or use it to grab a bay leaf from a pot of soup. When the tongs are pointed up, a gravity lock mechanism in the handle closes for compact storage. **TO BUY:** Spoon & Strain tongs, $7 to $9 (3 sizes); store.dexas.com.

CASSEROLE TO GO

Carry homemade lasagna (or a batch of warm cookies) with this handy poly-twill tote. It holds up to a 9-by-13-inch pan, withstands temps up to 250°F, and features sturdy handles that make transporting a cinch. **TO BUY:** Hot Date Casserole Carrier, $33; scoutbags.com.

SPRAYABLE GHEE

With a higher smoke point than olive oil and a butter-forward flavor, this dairy-free spray is perfect for greasing a skillet for eggs or a roasting pan for veggies. Works on nonstick, iron, and steel surfaces. **TO BUY:** Ghee Oil Spray, $9; fourthandheart.com.

PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

The Staple

If your familiarity with corn tortillas begins and ends with taco night, it's time to get to know this versatile ingredient. Brushed with butter and draped over a muffin tin, tortillas become an edible vessel for ice cream. They're also delicious as a binder in meatballs or tossed into a cheesy breakfast strata, where they play the role of cubed bread. Unlike flour tortillas, most corn tortillas are gluten-free: They're made from a type of corn flour called masa harina. (Whether they're yellow or white depends on the type of corn.) To keep them fresh and pliable, store tortillas in the fridge.

MISSION
Corn Tortillas
Pepito Style

PROP STYLING BY CHLOE DALEY

Quick Ideas

1 CORN TORTILLA ICE CREAM BOWLS

Brush 12 6-in. corn tortillas with 3 Tbsp. melted butter. Sprinkle with 1 Tbsp. sugar, 1 tsp. cinnamon, and ¼ tsp. salt. Drape tortillas, sugar side up, over upside-down muffin pan. Bake at 350°F for 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool completely, then fill with ice cream and berries.

2 PEPPER AND PESTO TORTILLA STRATA

Cut 10 6-in. corn tortillas into 1-in. strips. Arrange strips, 1 cup chopped roasted red peppers, and 2 cups shredded mozzarella in a greased 2-qt. baking dish. Combine 6 eggs, 1¼ cups whole milk, 3 Tbsp. pesto, and 1 tsp. salt; add to dish. Chill 1 hour; bake, covered, at 350°F for 35 minutes. Uncover; bake 10 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes, then cut into squares.

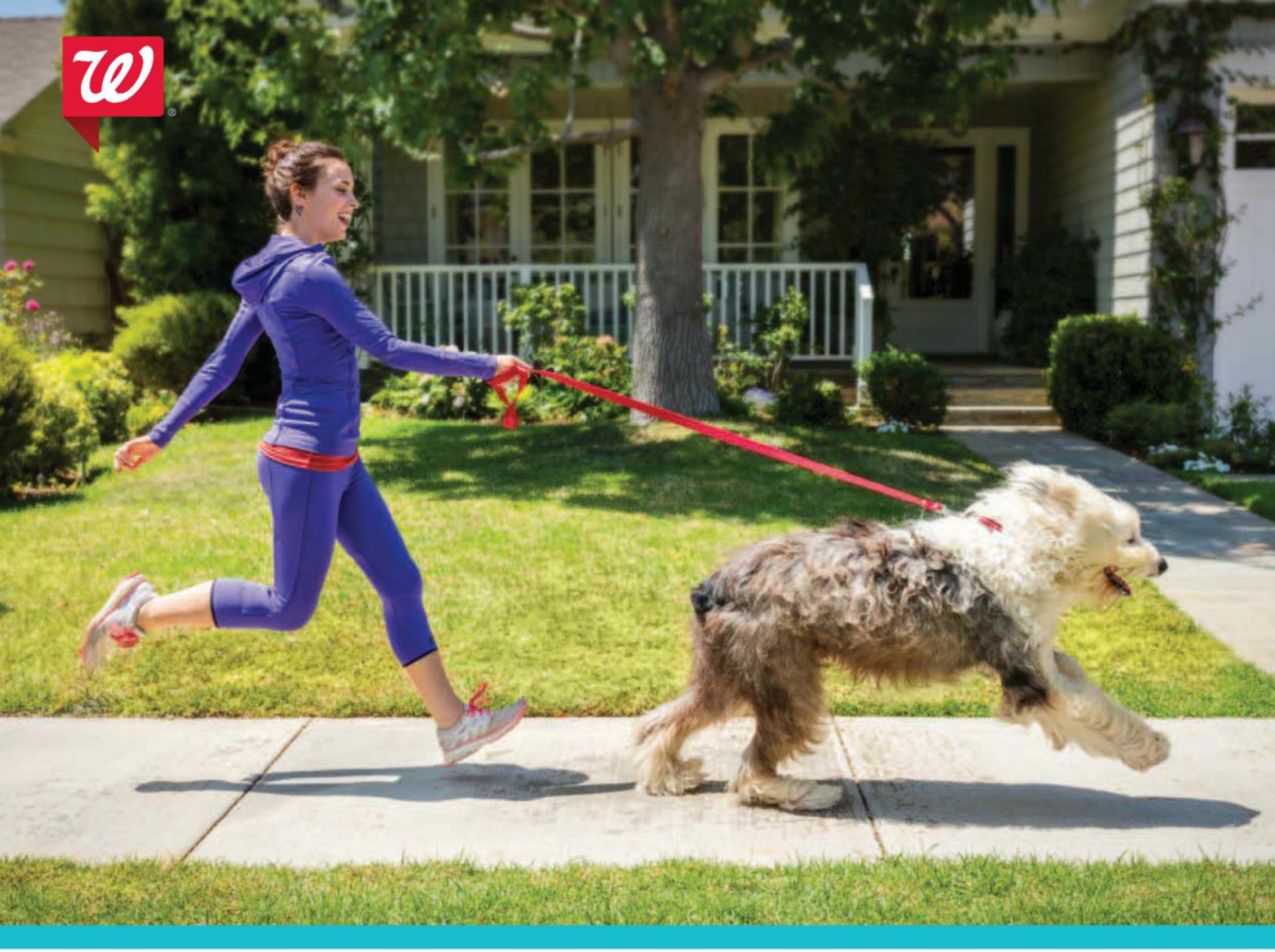
3 GLUTEN-FREE MEATBALLS

Process 2 6-in. corn tortillas, 1 shallot, and 2 Tbsp. parsley in a food processor. Combine tortilla mixture, 1 lb. ground beef, 2 Tbsp. heavy cream, 1 tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper in a large bowl. Form 16 meatballs; broil on a baking sheet until browned, 7 minutes.

By Grace Elkus

Recipes by Ivy Odom

Photograph by Corey Olsen



Take small steps to feel your best

Walgreens is here to help you take small steps to feel your best. That’s why we’re close by with all the vitamins and supplements you need to achieve your health goals. Take your first step at **Walgreens.com/GetHealthyHere**

NATURE'S BOUNTY
Biotin
10,000 mcg
Benefiber
Nature Made
Fish O
ONE A DAY
WOMEN'S

Walgreens Trusted since 1901™

Use as directed.

the realist

TO BUY:
(From top)
27 Miles Star Pointelle sweater, $275; 27milesmalibu.com.
L.L.Bean sweaters, $50 to $159; llbean.com.

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR SWEATERS

Always handwash natural fibers, such as cashmere and other woolens. Add a detergent meant for woolens, like Wool & Cashmere Shampoo ($19 for 16 oz.; thelaundress.com), to a basin of tepid water. Gently swish the garment around using your fingertips, then let it soak for up to 30 minutes before rinsing. Don't wring to dry—press out water by rolling up the sweater in a towel (like a sleeping bag) and lay it out to dry on a flat surface. Stack with like colors to prevent pilling transfer; wash every two to five wears.

By Brandi Broxson

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALBERTO BRAVO, COFOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR OF WE ARE KNITTERS; JADE HARWOOD, CREATIVE DIRECTOR AND COFOUNDER OF WOOL AND THE GANG; AND MICHELE CASPER, SPOKESPERSON AT LANDS' END. STYLING BY PAUL PETZY

Photograph by Brian Henn

Things Cooks Know

STRATEGIES, TECHNIQUES, AND TIPS ON HOW TO SHOP SMART IN THE NEW YEAR—FROM THE *REAL SIMPLE* TEST KITCHEN TO YOURS

By Ananda Eidelstein

Cherries
PEAS

Don't Avoid the Freezer Aisle

It's not all frozen pizza and ice cream down this way: Frozen fruit and vegetables are plenty healthy. Picked and put on ice at its peak, frozen produce maintains high nutrient levels and great flavor. Plus, our favorite short-season varieties, like cherries and peas, are available year-round. Try frozen cherries in a sauce for pork tenderloin at dinner or a rustic galette for dessert.

Go to **realsimple.com/frozen** for more smart tips on shopping the freezer aisle.

Stock Up Like a Chef

Multipurpose staples can enhance everyday dishes, even when you're short on time. Keep these key ingredients on hand.

ALMONDS Nutrient-dense, almonds lend satisfying texture to cooked grains and main-course dishes.

ANCHOVIES Use these little fish to add a briny hit of umami to pastas, sauces, and salad dressings.

BLACK PEPPERCORNS Freshly grind every time for fullest flavor.

CANNED CHICKPEAS Roasted until crispy or served simply as is, these protein-packed legumes bulk up soups and salads.

CANNED TOMATOES Great for your Italian dishes, obviously, but also in chili and braises.

FLAKED SEA SALT A finishing salt, perfect for vegetables and seared meats, that adds flair and crunch.

A HUNK OF PARMESAN Freshly shaved or grated, this nutty cheese perks up pastas, salads, and soups.

LEMONS Zest and juice brighten almost anything—chicken, pastas, seafood, veggie sides.

Tech to Take to the Store

Let these helpful apps lend you a hand.

KEY RING lightens the load on your key chain by storing all your loyalty cards (and gift cards) in one place for easy access. Bonus: The app lets you create and share shopping lists and find coupons and nearby sales.

SPECIALTY PRODUCE is a user-friendly encyclopedia of fruits, vegetables, and spices. It provides a vast amount of information on more than 2,200 items, including flavor profiles, pairing suggestions, and images that help you visually reference unfamiliar ingredients.

COZI, from Time Inc., which also owns *Real Simple,* makes planning dinner easier by transferring online recipe ingredients straight to your grocery list. Then plan your meals by scheduling said recipe for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snack. Lists are accessible by the whole family if you choose, and you can make your own subheadings depending on how you shop.

OFFSET; ILLUSTRATIONS BY ADAM CRUFT

Photograph by Helen Norman

IF A BROTH'S FIRST INGREDIENT IS WATER,
YOU'RE NOT MAKING SOUP,
YOU'RE BOILING VEGETABLES.

Some "other" brands start with water. We use rich, golden chicken stock. So when you're making soup, make it with 100% natural *Swanson*®

***SWANSON*. CHOOSE NATURAL.**
#whatsinyourbroth

America's #1 Broth
SWANSON
100% Natural
CHICKEN BROTH

© 2017 CSC Brands LP.

Now What?!?

SMART FIXES FOR LIFE'S LITTLE DISASTERS

By Blake Bakkila

Moths have invaded my dresser!

G.F., VIA EMAIL

THE FIX: Take everything out of your dresser and then use a vacuum to remove any visible moths, says Chelle Hartzer, an entomologist and manager of technical services for Orkin in Atlanta. Place vacuum contents in a sealed plastic bag and throw it away. Then wipe down your dresser inside and out with a damp cloth to remove any difficult-to-see larvae or eggs. (If you have a wooden dresser, follow up with a dry cloth to prevent water damage.) Despite what you may have heard, cedar chips aren't an effective method for killing moths, says Hartzer: "Having a tightly constructed chest is more important." Tumble any affected clothes and linens in the dryer or, for delicate items, place in a plastic bag and store in the freezer overnight. "Extreme temperatures can kill all stages of moths, from eggs to adults," says Hartzer. To prevent further infestations, avoid storing dirty garments—they can attract the nibbling pests.

My favorite houseplant struggles in the winter.

S.H., VIA EMAIL

THE FIX: Bend one of the stems or branches back and see if it snaps. If it doesn't, the plant is probably just dormant, which is normal for this time of year, says Marie Iannotti, creator of the site Gardening theHudsonValley.com. Many popular varieties, such as baby's tears, philodendrons, and Boston ferns, will revive if moved to a sunny spot that's not near a drafty window or heat source and that stays around 70 degrees. Lack of humidity can be tough on plants, so try misting yours every few days and watering it at least every two weeks. (But be sure to check its care label.)

The metal interior of my slow cooker is a mess.

R.B., VIA EMAIL

THE FIX: Remove the ceramic insert, then place a small bowl of ammonia inside the unplugged pot, says Jill Nystul of the blog OneGoodThingbyJillee.com. The ammonia will soften stuck-on food and other gunk. Place the lid on your cooker and let it sit overnight. The next day, take out the bowl and wipe the interior with a clean, wet dish towel. For persistent stains, combine one teaspoon of hydrogen peroxide and two to three teaspoons of baking soda to make a paste, and scrub the remaining stains with a sponge before wiping with a damp dish towel. Dry completely before placing the ceramic insert back in.

ANIKA SALSERA/GETTY IMAGES. SPECIAL THANKS TO KELLEN TUCKER, OWNER OF SHARKTOOTH ANTIQUE AND VINTAGE TEXTILES IN BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

© AS America, Inc. 2017.

VorMax® Plus
Toilet

Meet the smallest toilet brush ever engineered.

Introducing the VorMax® Plus self-cleaning toilet
There's one mission in Porcelain Valley: create products that make your life better every day. The new VorMax® Plus self-cleaning toilet includes the VorMax® Plus FreshInfuser,™ which releases toilet bowl cleaner into the bowl with every flush. Plus, the toilet is engineered with a flushing system that cleans 2x better* with just water. It's the cleanest, freshest flush ever engineered. See how it works at **americanstandard.com**

The replaceable VorMax® Plus FreshInfuser™
lasts for 30 days or 360 flushes.

*Than standard bowls. Source: Test Report No. 109-141486-002, comparing VorMax® against conventional under-the-rim-dispersal toilets from major retailers. LYSOL® is used under license to American Standard. © 2017. All rights reserved.

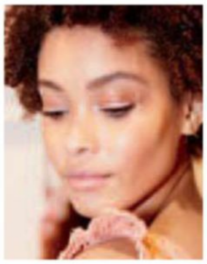
American Standard
BORN IN PORCELAIN VALLEY

Pretty Practical

White Liner

ON MORNINGS WHEN YOU FEEL (AND LOOK) TIRED, SWAP OUT BLACK FOR *BLANC* LINER TO BRIGHTEN EYES WITH MINIMAL EFFORT.

By Chelsea Traber Burns



RUNWAY INSPIRATION

Models at the Jonathan Simkhai spring/summer 2018 runway show wore neutral shadow topped with vanilla liner that served as little spotlights on their eyes.

1

ACE YOUR BASE

Brush a matte taupe powder, like Urban Decay Eyeshadow in Tease ($20; sephora.com), over your eyelids. Cover the lid from lash line to crease, then blend the edges for a diffused, lived-in look. Trace the shadow along your lower lash lines to complete the circle.

2

FAKE A LINE

Use a vanilla or champagne liner, like Givenchy Khôl Couture Waterproof Eyeliner in Light Gold ($27; barneys.com), and draw dashes along your lash line (it's less intimidating than making a straight line). Smudge it in the inner corners, then trace it along your bottom lash lines.

totaltemptation
MAYBELLINE

3

FLUFF UP LASHES

Finish the look with a quick coat of mascara. Try Maybelline New York Total Temptation Mascara ($9.50; at drugstores). Let the white liner steal the show by applying only one coat, just to the tips.

Find the best products to take off your eye makeup at realsimple.com/remover.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY TROI OLLIVIERRE BEAUTY; PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

Photograph by Mei Tao

Road Test

Hand Sanitizers

THESE ANTIBACTERIAL ALL-STARS—IN EVERY SIZE, SCENT, AND TEXTURE—WILL CLEAN YOUR HANDS WITHOUT DRYING THEM OUT. FLU SEASON, WE'RE READY FOR YOU.

By Lisa DeSantis

REAL SIMPLE
ROAD TEST

BEST FRAGRANCE

Aēsop Resurrection Rinse-Free Hand Soap
Hand-sanitizer scents tend to get a bad rap. Not this nonsticky gel. With mandarin rind, rosemary, and cedar, the citrus-woody scent is so lovely, you won't mind busting it out after every handshake. **TO BUY:** $10; aesop.com.

For 13 genius fixes for dry hands, go to **realsimple .com/dryhands.**

BEST TRAVEL-SIZE

Bath & Body Works PocketBac Hand Sanitizer in Energy
Sure, this one-ounce gel cleanses your hands, but the orange-ginger scent serves as a midday energy booster. **TO BUY:** $2; bathandbodyworks.com.

BEST CREAM

Byredo Rinse-Free Hand Wash in Suede
Yes, it's a splurge, but for those germ-prone nurses and teachers, this cream zaps bacteria while hydrating hands. Pear, lily of the valley, and amber—yum. **TO BUY:** $30; byredo.com.

BEST MULTIUSE

Jao Refresher Not Just for Hands
Think of this jumbo, eight-ounce bottle as a portable kitchen sink. Lavender and tea tree disinfect hands, help shrink zits, and calm skin after shaving. **TO BUY:** $18 for 8 oz.; jaobrand.com.

BEST SPRAY

The Honest Company Hand Sanitizer Spray in Grapefruit Grove
One plant-based, quick-dry mist will get the job done—even on antsy kids. **TO BUY:** $6 for 2; honest.com.

BEST FOAM

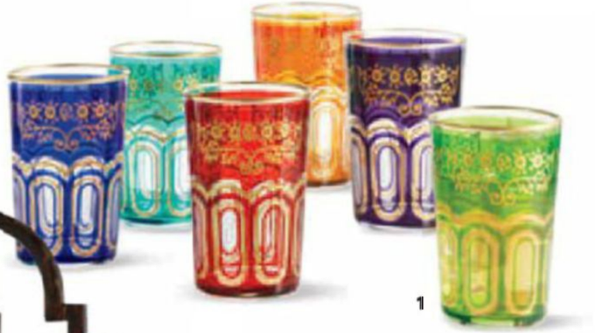
Tammy Fender The Purist Antibacterial Dry Hand Wash
A single airy puff cleanses hands and feet with 11 germ-fighting botanicals, such as thyme. **TO BUY:** $14; tammyfender.com.

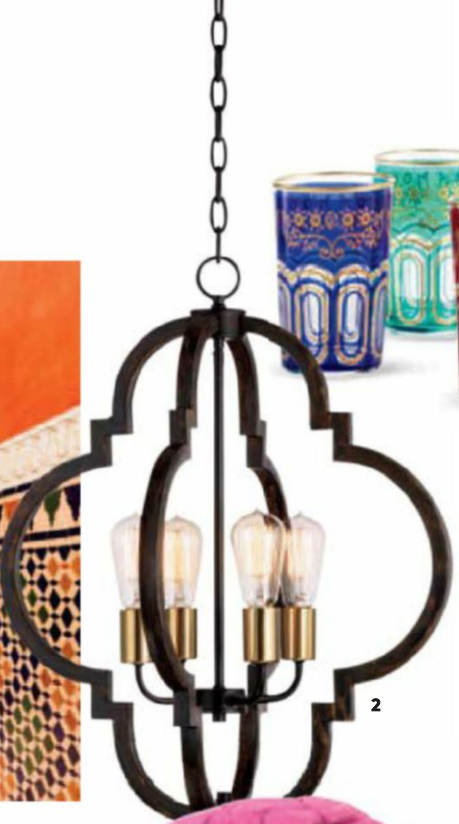
BEST WIPE

EO Lavender Hand Sanitizer Wipes
Stash these packets in your bag for cleansing on the go. In addition to swiping on your hands, wipe down your tray table and armrests while flying. **TO BUY:** $14 for 24; eoproducts.com.

PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS; SMEAR, GRANT CORNETT

INSPIRED BY
MOROCCO

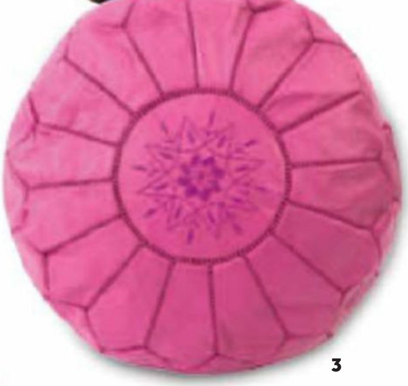

1

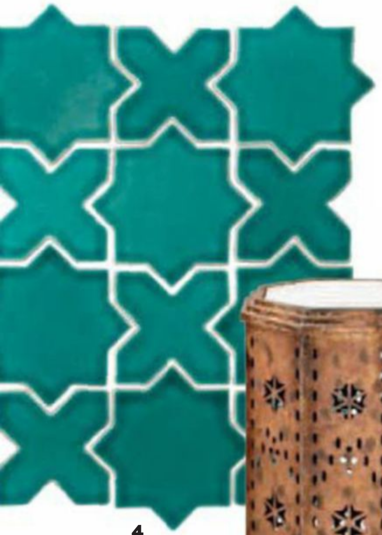

2

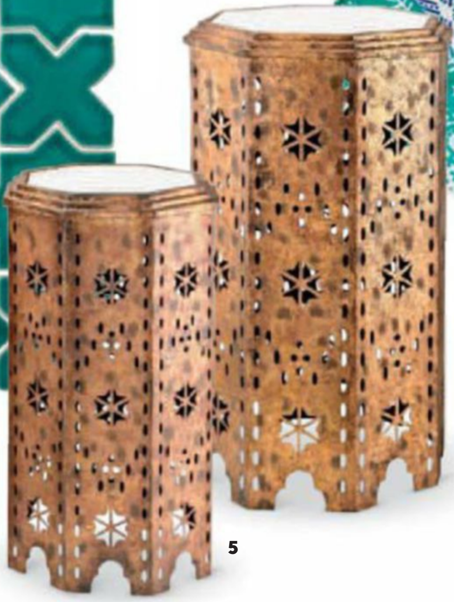
Design by Destination

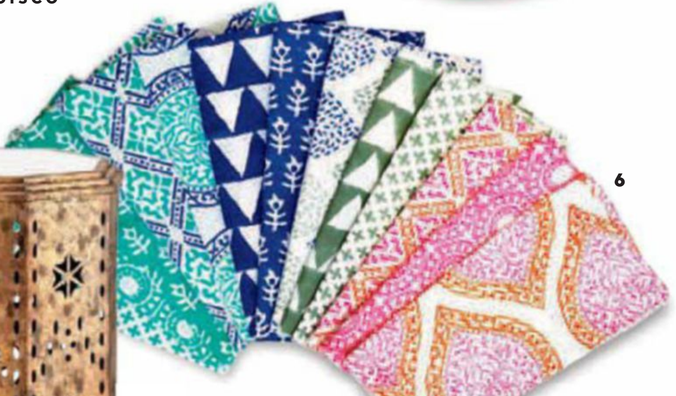
BRING HOME THE SPIRIT AND STYLE OF YOUR MOST MAGICAL VACATION SPOT (OR JUST PRETEND YOU WENT THERE).

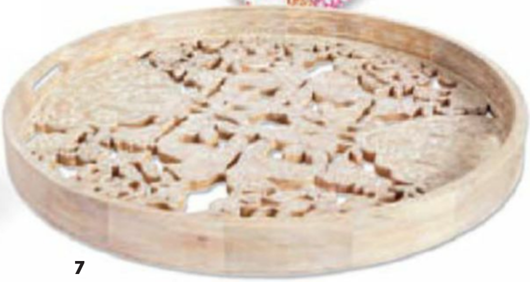
By Stephanie Sisco


3


4


5


6


7

1 VIBRANT GLASSWARE
Liven up your breakfast spread with this set of jewel-toned drinkware. **TO BUY:** Moroccan tea glasses, $36 for 6; worldmarket.com.

2 GEOMETRIC PENDANT
A quatrefoil light fixture is reminiscent of Morocco's tile motifs and elaborate arches. **TO BUY:** Ayoura wood-grain 4-light pendant chandelier, $300; lampsplus.com.

3 LEATHER POUF
This colorful handmade accent doubles as extra seating. Available in 28 colors. **TO BUY:** Ottoman pouf, $120; indigoandlavender.com.

4 STATEMENT TILES
Go bold with your backsplash and install vibrant glazed mosaic tiles. **TO BUY:** Emerald mini star and cross tiles, $35 per square foot; fireclaytile.com.

5 SET OF TABLES
Position this pair of punched-metal side tables next to an accent chair or sofa. **TO BUY:** Salma tables, $318 for 2; luluandgeorgia.com.

6 BOLD NAPKINS
Mix and match these block-printed linens for an eclectic table. **TO BUY:** Block-printed cotton napkins, $5 each; celadonathome.com.

7 INTRICATE TRAY
Serve drinks or stash remotes in this wooden tray carved with a kaleidoscopic floral motif. **TO BUY:** Whitewashed flower tray, $100; pier1.com.

MLENNY/GETTY IMAGES; PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

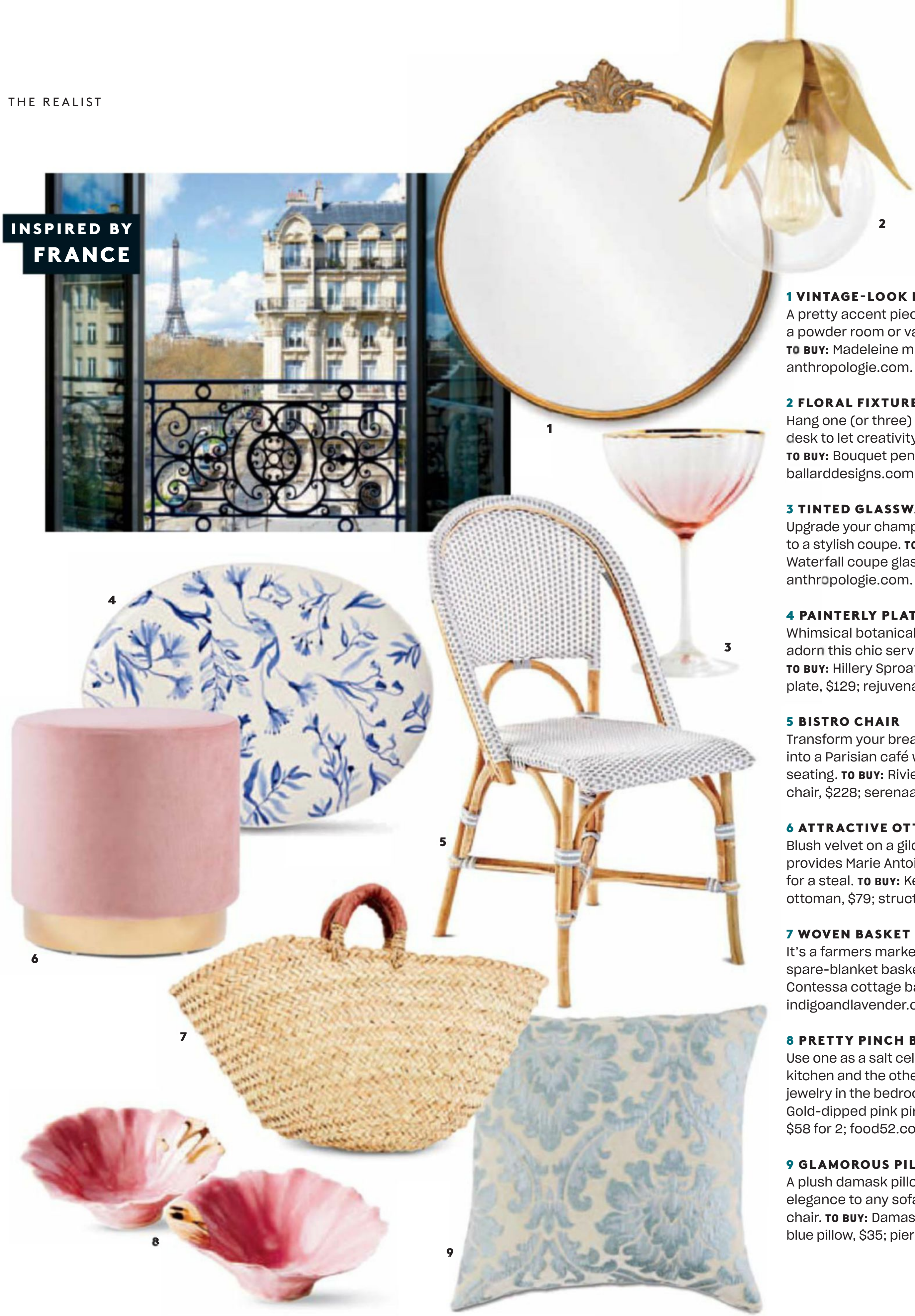
More saving. More doing.®
THE HOME DEPOT

MORE WAYS TO SHOP. MORE OPTIONS TO DISCOVER.

The Home Depot® is the #1 retailer of blinds and shades. Explore our huge selection of window treatments, from cordless and motorized shades to cellular and wood-look blinds. Choose from in-store options ready to take home today, use our custom online configurator and get free shipping, or schedule a free in-home consultation.

©2017 Home Depot Product Authority, LLC. All rights reserved.

INSPIRED BY FRANCE



1 VINTAGE-LOOK MIRROR
A pretty accent piece for a powder room or vanity. **TO BUY:** Madeleine mirror, $298; anthropologie.com.

2 FLORAL FIXTURE
Hang one (or three) above a desk to let creativity bloom. **TO BUY:** Bouquet pendant, $129; ballarddesigns.com.

3 TINTED GLASSWARE
Upgrade your champagne flute to a stylish coupe. **TO BUY:** Waterfall coupe glass, $16; anthropologie.com.

4 PAINTERLY PLATTER
Whimsical botanical drawings adorn this chic serving dish. **TO BUY:** Hillery Sproatt serving plate, $129; rejuvenation.com.

5 BISTRO CHAIR
Transform your breakfast nook into a Parisian café with woven seating. **TO BUY:** Riviera side chair, $228; serenaandlily.com.

6 ATTRACTIVE OTTOMAN
Blush velvet on a gilded base provides Marie Antoinette style for a steal. **TO BUY:** Keira velvet ottoman, $79; structube.com.

7 WOVEN BASKET
It's a farmers market tote—or a spare-blanket basket. **TO BUY:** Contessa cottage basket, $75; indigoandlavender.com.

8 PRETTY PINCH BOWLS
Use one as a salt cellar in the kitchen and the other to hold jewelry in the bedroom. **TO BUY:** Gold-dipped pink pinch bowls, $58 for 2; food52.com.

9 GLAMOROUS PILLOW
A plush damask pillow adds elegance to any sofa or side chair. **TO BUY:** Damask smoke blue pillow, $35; pier1.com.

PARK LANE PICTURES/OFFSET; PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

INSPIRED BY
DENMARK

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

1 MATTE KETTLE
Get the perfect pour from this sleek black vessel. **TO BUY:** Stagg pour-over kettle, $79; aplusrstore.com.

2 SIMPLE CLOCK
This timepiece has the clean-lined, minimalist design that defines classic Danish style. **TO BUY:** Bi-color plywood clock, $95; momastore.org.

3 MODERN FLATWARE
The thin tapered handles add a chic silhouette to the table. **TO BUY:** Goa cutlery, $75 for a 5-piece set; shophorne.com.

4 SHEEPSKIN RUG
Place this cozy accent on the floor beside your bed or over the back of a chair. **TO BUY:** Ivory New Zealand sheepskin area rug, $80; worldmarket.com.

5 GEOMETRIC VASES
Powder-coated metal vessels that look decorative empty or full. **TO BUY:** Metal hexagon vases, from $25; cleverspaces.com.

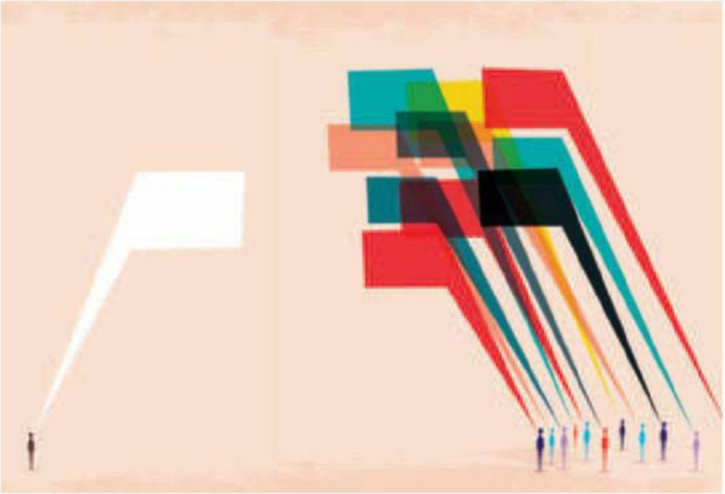
6 ROLLING TABLE
Use this two-tiered surface as a storage cart or side table. **TO BUY:** Block table in dusty green, $308; normann-copenhagen.com.

7 UPHOLSTERED CHAIR
The midcentury silhouette is updated with a fabric seat. **TO BUY:** Miles upholstered side chair, $299; shophesby.com.

8 LOW-PILE RUG
A durable wool rug in an abstract stripe. **TO BUY:** Bronden rug, $279 (5 ft. 7 in. by 7 ft. 10 in.); ikea.com for stores.

Get more inspiring decor ideas in your inbox every week. Sign up for our *Daily Finds* newsletter at realsimple.com/homefinds.

SCANRAIL/GETTY IMAGES; PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS



Real Simplifier

How to Deal with Customer Service

No receipt? No problem. Here, experts share the secrets to beating the customer service system to return unwanted gifts, eliminate travel headaches, and get your issues resolved quickly.

By Kathleen Murray Harris

1

PAUSE BEFORE OPENING

Even in the mad rush of opening holiday gifts, unwrap each present carefully. Don't throw away a gift receipt and never open an electronics box if there's a possibility of returning it. "Store policies about electronics especially can be tricky, since they'll want to resell the item," says Shep Hyken, a customer service and experience expert and the author of *Amaze Every Customer Every Time*. Stretched-out cords and missing packaging make others less likely to buy. Too late? Pack up the box as carefully as possible, even wrapping the cords with twist ties. You'll have better luck at the return desk.

2

BE EXTRA NICE

Stand out from the crowd by trying to elicit a smile. "If you go in with a bad attitude, they're going to fight fire with fire," says Hyken. Introduce yourself and ask for the rep's name. "They're trained to use your name to build rapport—do the same to endear yourself to them," says Hyken.

3

EMPOWER THE AGENT

On a primal level, people want to succeed at their jobs, and customer service reps are no different, says Lynette Padwa, author of *Say the Magic Words.* Don't make threats or immediately request their supervisor. Make the rep feel like a powerful problem solver. Hyken recommends saying, "I'm hoping you're the person who can help me today."

4

ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT

Be direct. "Don't expect people to understand what you're implying," says Padwa. If you're trying to unload a gift past the return window, say you know the store has a 30-day return policy, then explain why the item should be refunded anyway. Or if they're strict about needing a gift receipt, say, "I shop here all the time, and I don't want to offend my aunt by asking her for the receipt. Can I exchange the gift today for something in the store?"

5

PAY ATTENTION

It's natural to want to multitask in these situations, but it's better to focus on the conversation. "People can tell when you're not listening," says Padwa. Put your phone away, make eye contact, and be fully present in the conversation.

6

USE TWITTER (POLITELY)

Social media is a valuable customer service tool and can often get you an immediate response. Start by sending the company a direct message on Twitter with a description of your problem and your account number. If you get no response, DM them a second time. Still crickets? "Go public but continue to be nice," says Hyken. "When I realized I was going to miss my flight connection while midair, I DM'ed the airline with my frequent flier number, and they rebooked my flight before I even landed."

7

TRY CONTACTING THE CEO

If you've moved up the supervisor chain and still aren't satisfied, go to the top, says Hyken. Search for the president's or CEO's name and the phone number of the company's headquarters. Call and ask to speak with someone in his office. While you probably won't get the CEO on the phone, you will get his gatekeeper, who may be able to solve your problem fast.

Illustration by Andrew Bannecker

Holiday Party

HOLIDAY MOVIE

Fancy.

BUT NOT TOO

Fancy.™

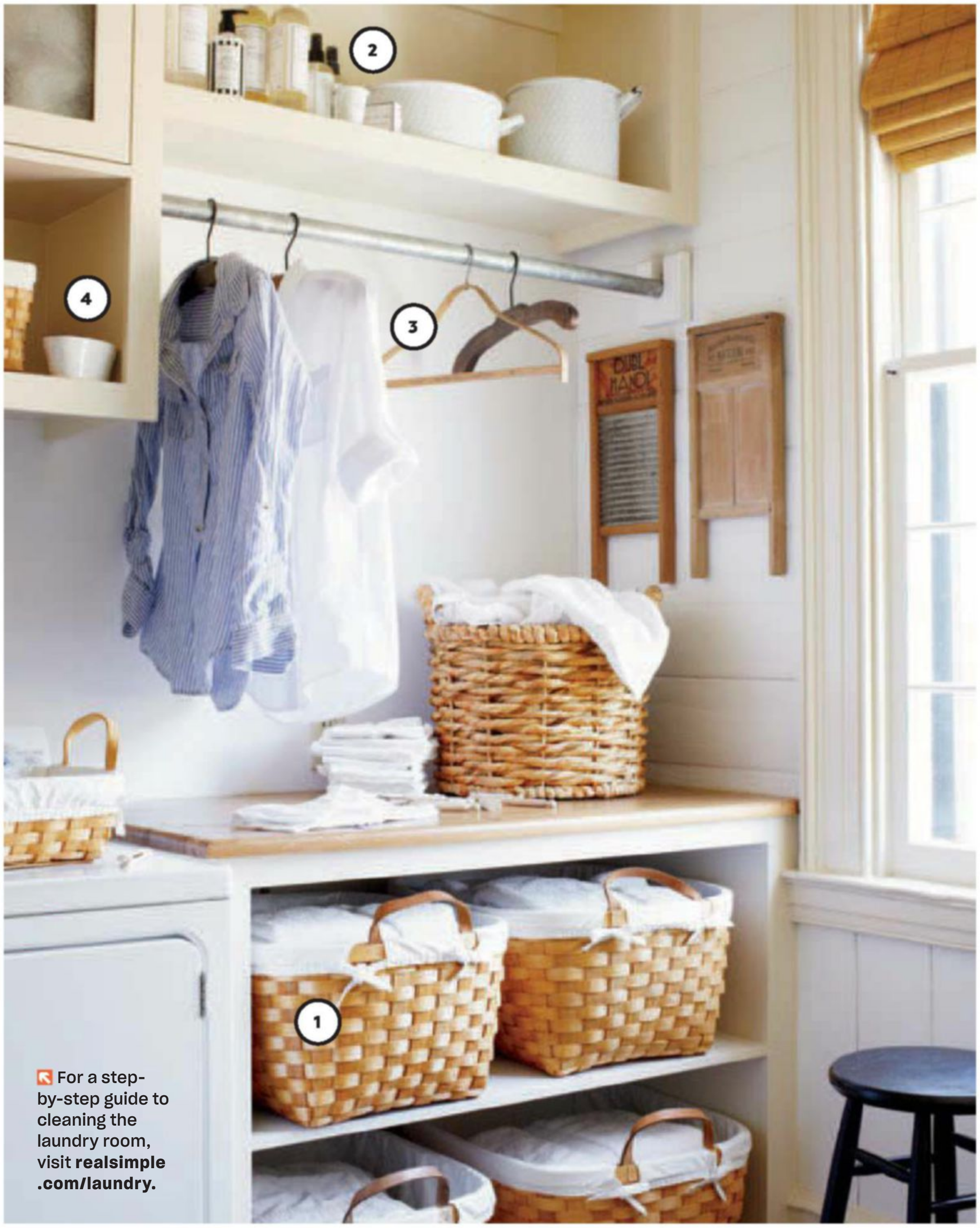
FIND US IN THE DELI

All trademarks are owned by Stacy's Pita Chip Company, Inc. ©2017

BAKED
Stacy's
Pita Chips
CINNAMON SUGAR

Organize This

JULIE CARLSON AND MARGOT GURALNICK, AUTHORS OF *REMODELISTA: THE ORGANIZED HOME*, SHARE THEIR INSIDER TIPS ON HOW TO SORT THROUGH LAUNDRY ROOM CHAOS.



For a step-by-step guide to cleaning the laundry room, visit **realsimple .com/laundry.**

1 KEEP IT NATURAL
Wherever possible, avoid plastic. Woven or cloth baskets allow air to flow through, preventing moisture and odors from becoming trapped. Place one basket per family member (or bedroom) in the laundry room to transport clean clothes come laundry day.

2 CONTROL OVERFLOW
Store laundry soap and stain removers on a tray or jelly-roll pan to contain drips and spills. For a uniform look that will instantly elevate this work space, decant dry detergent into a metal canister. **TO BUY:** Brimfield & May metal galvanized canisters, $35 for 3; houzz.com.

3 AIR-DRY
Take advantage of unused overhead space with a drying rack—either a hanging rod (shown) or a rack on a pulley. Wall-mounted retractable clotheslines work well in smaller laundry rooms. **TO BUY:** Hanging Drying Rack, $255; georgeandwilly.com.

4 CREATE A CATCHALL
Keep a jar near the dryer to collect small items left in pockets or buttons that come loose during cleaning.

5 HANG IT UP
Install a peg rail (not shown) to stash useful tools, such as scissors, a clothes brush, rags, and a stepladder, within easy reach. **TO BUY:** Maple Shaker Peg Rack, from $10; containerstore.com.

OTTO

Photograph by Björn Wallander

DISCOVER OUR SKIN-FRIENDLY DETERGENT WITH A FRESH SCENT.

No wonder it's preferred 2 to 1 vs. the leading Free detergent.*

ARM & HAMMER™ Sensitive Skin Plus Scent is our first scented detergent clinically tested for sensitive skin. It's the secret to clean, great-smelling laundry.

*In a nationwide survey; among those with a preference; preference based on scent.

ARM & HAMMER
TM
THE STANDARD OF PURITY
TM
Clinically Tested
FOR SENSITIVE SKIN
Plus
Skin-Friendly
Fresh Scent
FOR ALL MACHINES
HE

THE CLEAN YOU NEED AT A FRACTION OF THE COST.†

†Per load vs. the leading detergent.

A Better Way to Buy Clothes

PERSONAL STYLING IS NO LONGER JUST FOR OSCAR NIGHT. WHETHER YOU PREFER TO HAVE AN EXPERT COME TO YOU, HIT THE STORES, OR DO IT ALL ONLINE, WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU FIND PIECES YOU'LL WEAR OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND...

By Rebecca Daly

Illustrations by Ayumi Takahashi

Expert Assistance

What is it?

The concept of a "personal stylist" may sound like an out-there luxury, but having someone help with the everyday tasks of putting together outfits and keeping your closet in check sure sounds good, whatever your lifestyle (we all wear clothes, right?). If you like face-to-face communication and the convenience of having someone come to your home, personal shoppers and stylists can bring years of fashion-industry experience to the table. They'll help edit and organize your wardrobe, pick out new pieces, and create outfits that work for your life.

Who should do it?

Anyone who wants to look and feel pulled together but doesn't have the time (or the inclination) to shop much or keep up with trends. "It used to be that only celebrities had stylists," says Alyssa Dineen, a New York City–based personal stylist. "But in the past few years, my client roster has switched over to busy working moms who want to look good but have other, bigger priorities."

What to try

$$$

STYLE OVERHAUL

The biggest bang for your buck (and also the biggest investment) is hiring a pro like Dineen to provide a complete style overhaul. This entails first fine-tuning what you already own—figuring out what you love and weeding out the things you never wear. Then she'll help you assess your personal style and what looks good on you. The best part: a one-on-one shopping trip where she'll pick out pieces, help you get them tailored, and match them with things you already own. Websites like ThumbTack.com provide quotes and reviews for services. Expect to pay anywhere from a few hundred dollars to a few thousand, depending on your location and the stylist's experience.

$$

CLOSET CONSULTATION

Most personal shoppers also offer a sort of à la carte menu. If you enjoy shopping for fun, for example, you can opt for just the closet consultation, where your personal stylist will help you organize your wardrobe and restyle your own pieces in new ways.

$

PHONE A FRIEND

Taking a DIY approach to the same process can also work wonders. "Style is such a personal thing, it's hard to be objective about it," says Dineen. "Just having another opinion can help make sense of the noise." She suggests bringing in your most fashionable and forthright friend, pouring a glass of wine, and making an evening of it. Try on anything you're unsure about and get their honest opinion. Then sort your newly pared-down wardrobe by category (work, casual, going out) and type (pants, tops, dresses). This will clearly show you any holes and any excess—who knew it was possible to own so many black pencil skirts?—so you can keep this in mind on your next shopping expedition.

In-Store Insiders

What is it?

Many large department stores have historically offered in-store personal shopping concierges. If you think the service comes with an enormous store tab, think again. Many options are low- to no-cost.

Who should do it?

Anyone who needs a little guidance culling the overstuffed racks. “Our personal shoppers are people who can maximize our clients’ time—and budget,” says John Cruz, senior vice president of private client relations at Saks Fifth Avenue. “They can help you build an entire wardrobe, find a new look for a special occasion, or even find the perfect gift.”

What to try

$$$

IN DEPARTMENT STORES

Nearly all the big names (Bergdorf Goodman, Saks Fifth Avenue, Nordstrom, Macy’s) offer free consulting services to help you shop. Saks takes it a step further with a no-charge, post-consultation closet clean-out, and the pros at Bergdorf’s will in some cases do a styling session in your home gratis and help you integrate your new pieces into your closet. The catch? The not-free part is designer duds, of course.

$$

ON THE HIGH STREET

Many of your favorite affordable stores at the mall also offer on-site help that most shoppers don’t know about. J. Crew will open a store early (or keep it open late) to suit your schedule if you book in advance. Chico’s offers private styling appointments early and late in the day to accommodate work schedules, and its stylists are available 24/7 by phone or email.

$

SOPHISTICATED STAFF

Many stores that don’t offer personal consulting do have exceptionally knowledgeable employees. Stores like Ann Taylor, Banana Republic, Club Monaco, Loft, and Madewell put personnel through rigorous training about issues such as sizing, silhouettes, fit, and materials, making them well qualified to help you. To walk away with only what you need, keep questions as specific as possible. For example, “Can you tell me which of your pant styles are cut for fuller hips?” will help you make an informed choice, while “Which top is cuter?” might result in buyer’s remorse.

Online Options

What is it?

If you'd prefer your personal styling to be a slightly less, well, "personal" experience, try taking it to the internet instead. From online platforms that let you interact with a celebrity stylist to apps that will completely automate your closet, there's a digital-first solution to all your wardrobe woes.

Who should do it?

Really, anyone. Digital platforms are great for commitment-phobes, anyone in an area without access to in-person professionals, and those who just want to test the waters before committing to a pro. "We're in the business of personalization," says Lisa Bougie, general manager of Stitch Fix (stitchfix.com), a popular online personal styling service that offers on-demand clothing shipments and sizes up to 24W and 3X. "We serve clients who are petite and plus and everything in between and strive for diversity in aesthetic as well. But most important, it's about convenience and saving time."

What to try

$$$

VIRTUAL STYLING

Many new services are popping up online, but Glamhive (glamhive.com) stands out because it connects users to celebrity stylists like Lindsey Dupuis, who has worked with Brittany Snow and Sharon Stone. Users select a stylist, who is then available via video to help you sort through your closet, style outfits, and even do a personalized online shopping session. "You can connect whenever and wherever," says Dupuis.

$$

SUBSCRIPTION BOXES

The closest thing to a "set it and forget it" option for your wardrobe, clothing subscription boxes blend a human touch with digital convenience. Stitch Fix uses computer algorithms as well as stylists to select five unique pieces for each shipment. "Our clients love discovering new brands and trends they wouldn't have picked up for themselves," says Bougie. Nota bene, procrastinators: Although return shipping is generally covered, many clothing subscription boxes give you a three-day period to decide what you want to keep. If you don't return items within that narrow window, you'll be charged for them.

$

APPS

Always dreamed of having Cher Horowitz's computerized closet in *Clueless?* Finery.com, a free website and app, pulls your purchases automatically from your emails to create a virtual closet so you can organize and style what you own. It will even keep track of return dates and remind you when they're coming up. Cladwell (cladwell.com) maintains a huge database of styles—pick what's most similar to the items in your own closet to create a virtual wardrobe and the app will send you weather-appropriate outfit suggestions each morning. Need a second outfit opinion before heading out on a first date? Amazon Prime members can take advantage of the company's Outfit Compare feature, which lets users upload photos of two ensembles for quick feedback from Amazon's fashion specialists on which one looks better.

Check out **realsimple.com/closet** for even more tips.

Personal Shopper

THE BEST BUDGET-FRIENDLY BUYS, ALL SELECTED BY A FASHION INSIDER

Why not let a pro scour the stores for you? This month the blogger behind un-fancy.com picks the perfect cozy pieces to ward off winter's chill—and they're all under $200.

▲

Caroline Rector

Rector is a champion of the capsule-wardrobe concept—that is, buying a few pieces to augment a total wardrobe of about 30 pieces per season. The style blogger's casual, less-is-more approach has been spotlighted on the *Today* show. Follow @caroline_joy on Instagram for more easy-outfit inspiration and check out her free wardrobe planner at un-fancy.com.

H&M ANKLE BOOTS

"A low, walkable heel and a low price? Win-win." **TO BUY:** $40; hm.com.

THE GROUP BY BABATON THURLOW SWEATER

"Is there anything better than a warm, slouchy sweater when it's cold? Not in my book! This one is made with a blend of wool and yak, so it's extra toasty." **TO BUY:** $110; us.aritzia.com.

LOFT MODERN FRAYED CUFF STRAIGHT LEG JEANS

"After the holidays, I'm ready to give my skinny jeans a break and reach for denim that's comfortable and a little slouchy, like these boyfriend jeans." **TO BUY:** $80; loft.com.

ZARA SOFT-FEEL SCARF

"I love playing warm neutrals, like tan and burnt sienna, against cooler hues, like black and gray. Toss this scarf on over a gray sweater to tie the tones together effortlessly." **TO BUY:** $36; zara.com.

ABLE ABERA CROSSBODY TOTE

"Behold the power of a good basic. A high-quality classic like this will be in your wardrobe for years to come. A bonus? This brand empowers women by creating jobs in communities where they're often most needed." **TO BUY:** $178; livefashionable.com.

See more of Caroline's favorites at **realsimple.com/cozyclothes.**

COURTESY OF CAROLINE RECTOR; PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS; SCARF: DYAD PHOTOGRAPHY; STYLING BY SABRINA GRANDE

ADVERTISEMENT

THE
FOOD & WINE™
COLLECTION

Now Available at HSN

SHOP THE NEW COLLECTION
SEARCH FOOD & WINE AT HSN.COM

FOOD & WINE™
F&W
TEST KITCHEN APPROVED

**$10 OFF YOUR FIRST FOOD & WINE ORDER
WITH CODE 176490**

HSN It's fun here®

Coupon 176490 can be used on more than one item and can only be used once by its recipient and is valid for new HSN customers only. This coupon is valid for $10 off your HSN order of $20 or more from HSN's distributed commerce platforms, HSN TV, HSN2, HSN.COM, HSN Mobile or HSN Shop By Remote (where available). Coupon number is non-transferable. Coupons must be applied when order is placed. Excludes shipping & handling, sales tax, Today's Special, Today's Special Presale, This Day Only offers, and clearance items and can only be applied to the first shipment of Auto-Ship items. The use of this coupon may disqualify the order from inclusion in other promotional offers or discounts. Coupons cannot be applied to or combined with other coupons. Coupon is not valid for Arrow Sewing, charitable contributions, gift cards, wine and alcohol, Janome, Samsung large appliances, selected footwear, the iRobot Roomba 880, electronics and gaming. We reserve the right to cancel orders when unexpected coupon system errors occur or in the case of abuse, misuse or fraud in connection with the coupon number. Offer is valid 10/1/2017-1/31/2018. Coupon Expires on 1/31/2018

wonderful together.
Bona
Bona
Bona

Bona's next generation of wood floor mops, engineered to work with Bona's waterbased, no-residue wood floor cleaner. Bona. For simply beautiful floors.

Bona.

Learn more at Bona.com

©2018 Bona US.
All Rights Reserved.

relating

5 SKILLS IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN

By Sarah Robbins

1

How to swim

Swimming is an essential skill, but millions of adults don't know how to do it. That's because the most important part of learning how to swim is learning to feel safe and comfortable in deep water. Most traditional swim lessons are geared toward kids, who don't feel the fear that adults do and can jump right into the mechanics of how to move their arms and legs to do the different strokes. Adults who worry they'll drown can't start learning strokes until they first learn not to panic. Ask the instructor, "Do you teach that comfort in the water comes first?" If he or she can't answer the question, chances are it's not a good fit.

MELON DASH IS THE FOUNDER OF MIRACLE SWIMMING FOR ADULTS. SHE LIVES IN SARASOTA, FLORIDA.

STOCKSY

Photograph by Ellie Baygulov

CHRISTOPHE PAPKE/OFFSET

2

How to code

I love computers, but everyone discouraged me from using them when I was growing up, because I'm female. When I was 38, I decided I'd learn to code. Through online classes and an in-person boot camp, I've expanded my understanding of the world—and of myself. I love the languages and rules of HTML and CSS; they quickly let me create something that's often very beautiful. To learn, start online and get a taste of the tech community by looking for gatherings on meetup.com. Let yourself explore so you can discover who you are now rather than believe you will always be the same as you were.

LETTA RAVEN IS A TECH SUPPORT SPECIALIST WHO LIVES IN PORTLAND, OREGON.

3

How to turn stress into joy

The ability to find joy in your daily life is highly teachable. Here's an easy way to practice during a tense moment: First, secretly identify someone around you. It can be anyone—your challenging coworker, the driver who just cut you off in traffic, the person you're serving a meal to at the local shelter. Then take in one slow, deep breath, giving full attention to the feeling in either your nose or your belly, and maintain that focus as you slowly exhale. As you exhale, think, "I wish for this person to be happy!" Sincere goodwill is picked up unconsciously by others and creates trust that leads to more positive interactions.

CHADE-MENG TAN, ONE OF GOOGLE'S FIRST ENGINEERS, IS CREATOR OF THE "SEARCH INSIDE YOURSELF" MINDFULNESS COURSE. THE AUTHOR OF *JOY ON DEMAND,* HE LIVES IN THE BAY AREA.

4

How to dance

I learned to dance a lot later than my peers. Most of them started as children and were able to get great technique and incredible fundamentals that way. I went to an arts high school for theater. One day, in rehearsal, I watched a dance number. I saw my classmates in the dark theater telling such a beautiful story without moving their mouths. I thought, "I want to do that." If you want to learn to dance, even just socially, surround yourself with other people who are good at it and whom you enjoy being with. It's all about the environment and the vibes. Find a studio where you like the people and they make you feel comfortable, and watch them closely. I believe that observing is just as effective as practicing—it's the best way to pick up an impressive move or two.

TYLER McKENZIE IS A DANCER WHO HAS APPEARED ON BROADWAY IN *MAMMA MIA, MATILDA,* AND *HAMILTON.* HE LIVES IN NEW YORK CITY.

5

How to tell a joke

There are so many people who have a great sense of humor who don't think they have the confidence to make people laugh. But telling a joke is a great icebreaker. The one thing to keep in mind as you're getting started is that you don't have to tell your own joke. As long as you give credit where it's due—"You know what Margaret Cho says, right?"—there's nothing wrong with sharing someone else's joke in your own, funny way. Joke telling is a kind of public speaking; build up your confidence by practicing on your coworkers, friends, or family. It's a strange experience to suddenly be the center of attention, but people love to laugh. And the stuff that makes you laugh tells people who you are.

LINDSAY GOLDWERT IS A WRITER AND COMEDIAN BASED IN QUEENS, NEW YORK.

For more tips on embracing change no matter how old you are, go to **realsimple.com/change.**

Irresistible Recipes to

STOCK *the* CROCK!

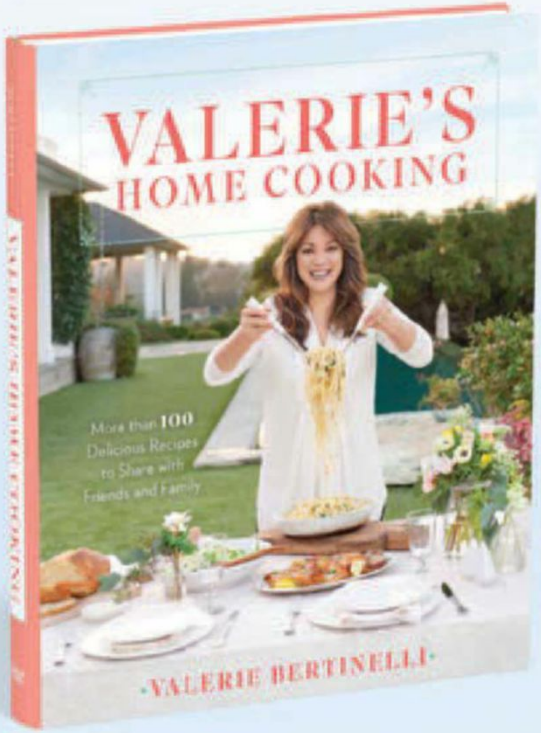
Turn out comforting slow-cooker dishes and luscious desserts with "another-piece-please" deliciousness!

PHYLLIS GOOD
Creator of the Bestselling Fix-It and Forget-It Series
STOCK the CROCK
100 Must-Have Slow-Cooker Recipes
200 Variations for Every Appetite
ON SALE NOW

stockthecrock.com

Oxmoor House. Time Inc. BOOKS © 2017 Phyllis Good. Design and photography © 2017 Time Inc. Books.
Published by Oxmoor House, an imprint of Time Inc. Books.

Valerie Bertinelli tells a story with each one of her recipes.


VALERIE'S
HOME COOKING
More than 100 Delicious Recipes to Share with Friends and Family
VALERIE BERTINELLI

Valerie's Home Cooking invites home cooks into Valerie's kitchen to experience her family's favorite comforting classics with an original twist. More than 100 recipes are transformed into crave-worthy new dishes, each one as fresh, fun, and vibrant as Valerie herself.

AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD

"Valerie may work as an actress but what she is, is a cook...and a damn fine one at that."
—Alton Brown

"When I turn the pages of this book, I feel as if I've been invited into Valerie's home."
—Alex Guarnaschelli

"Valerie's wonderful home cooking book makes it look so easy and so much fun!"
—Betty White

©2017 Oxmoor House, an imprint of Time Inc. Books

STOCKSY

Good Read

Unhandy Man

MIDDLE AGE WAS APPROACHING, AND **STEVE FRIEDMAN** FELT LISTLESS. WERE THERE ANSWERS SOMEWHERE IN HIS TOOLBOX?

NOT TOO LONG AGO, I decided to build a bookshelf.

Proficiency with tools has always been important to me. As a college student, I carried *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* wherever I went. Three decades later, I recommended *Shop Class as Soulcraft* to friends in distress as well as to people I barely knew but who seemed sad. I promised that working with their hands—hammering and sanding, measuring and tightening—might bring them the kind of peace that yoga, therapy, and prayer never would.

I never read either book. Except for seventh-grade shop class, where I sawed and varnished a cutting board that turned out to look like a hideously deformed bluegill, most of my experience at handiness was aspirational, if not outright dishonest.

Photograph by Boris Jovanovic

Why did I need to build a bookshelf? Because if I was going to suffer a crisis, I wanted it to be something less overtly humiliating than hair plugs?

Even now, when people ask how my work is going (I'm a writer), I say I'm "hacking away" or "tweaking" or "polishing" or "restructuring" or "adding some layers." When I am feeling especially ineffectual, I tell anyone who asks (and some who don't) that I am "torquing" a piece of work. I make myself sound more like a granite-jawed, flinty-eyed motorcycle mechanic and less like a middle-aged man with poor posture and lower-back pain.

Did I need to build a bookshelf because the muscular verbs were no longer doing the trick? Because I found myself overweight and underearning, and if I was going to suffer a crisis, I wanted it to be something less overtly humiliating than hair plugs? Would I really be "building" anything if I merely mounted a shelf using brackets and screws? Only fake torquers ask such questions.

I Googled "how to mount a shelf." I strolled to the neighborhood hardware store. According to the instructions, I would have a shelf mounted in 15 minutes.

Two hours and 45 minutes later, I shone with sweat. My neck ached. My fingers were cramped and crisscrossed with mysterious cuts. My left big toe was bruised and swollen. On the floor, mocking me, a hammer. On my apartment wall, taunting me, smeared, redrawn, smeared again, pencil lines. Hiding somewhere underneath my bed, a ruler and some screws. But there, on the wall, a three-foot-long, foot-wide plank of self-affirmation.

The next day I borrowed a power drill and mounted my second 15-minute shelf—in two hours. The day after that, I explored the secrets of the mysterious floating shelf. That was when I learned the maddening properties of the abomination known as drywall.

It was a tempestuous week. I discovered the simple but mighty "toggle bolt." I dropped "toggle bolt" into conversation whenever I could. I ascertained that toggle bolts were absolutely necessary when working with drywall, especially when the criminally named tool known as the stud finder failed to locate a single stud. This was not the only sad wisdom I accrued. I became acquainted with an ingenious-looking, screwdriver-size drill, only to discover that it did not perform so well when I was trying to drive inch-long screws into what turned out to be concrete.

I worried. I wondered. Did working with shelves provide just another obsessive path down a self-involved, solipsistic tunnel to nowhere? I was familiar with a few of those paths. I remembered with some embarrassment the winter I left a steady job to write a novel and ended up staying in bed every day for a month until 11 a.m., eating cold pizza and reading books on Hitler. Would my time be better spent on something less self-obsessed, more useful?

After another week of contemplation, I caught myself. Mechanics with thousand-yard stares don't wonder. Flinty eyes don't worry. I am a rock, I am an island, etc. Rather than fret, I installed a 15-minute shelf in 83 minutes, then another in 55 minutes. By week's end, I could put up a 15-minute shelf in 38½ minutes.

And then there was no more space in my apartment.

HANDS IDLE, TOGGLE BOLT–LESS, I gained weight. Building—I mean mounting—shelves had kept me busy and taken my mind off things. Now what? There was Chubby Hubby ice cream. And chocolate sauce. There were television shows about unfriendly visitors from distant solar systems. There was a lot of what my therapist calls "self-defeating rumination." Maybe there was some whipped cream. These activities, I realize now, are the things I had hoped my shelf building—sorry, shelf mounting—would replace: unhealthy markers of a poorly adjusted middle age; ill-chosen coping devices that served as distractions from the endless meh of daily life; diversions from the melancholy knowledge of ineluctable death.

It's the curse of the existentially weary shelf builder who has run out of wall space. I needed to create meaning in my life. But what kind? And how?

There were endless options, and I found them all wanting. Rescue an abandoned pit bull from the pound? Join a running group? I don't love animals, and I'm somewhat inert. I replaced the flapper in my toilet tank and felt a

STEVE GORTON/GETTY IMAGES

pleasing surge of manly peace, but it was short-lived.

I took refuge in high-minded crankiness. I decided that the things we think matter don't. Not shelves. Not careers. Not a bigger apartment. Not trading stocks. None of it mattered. I decided that we humans were nothing but two-legged beavers busily building doomed multistory dams with three bedrooms and river views.

It was a long month. I cut back on alien-abduction docudramas and midnight descents into sugary oblivion. My younger sister telephoned, and when I told her I thought I had a line on some interesting new toggle bolts, she said she was worried, that I should get out of my apartment and exercise. So I took a long, moody hike through the hardware-store aisles but averted my eyes from a floating corner shelf with a handsome profile. Why torture myself? Afterward, there was some self-defeating rumination. Maybe there was a very large piece of frosted coconut cake.

I tried yoga and meditation. I cut out coffee, added fish oil pills. Still, no peace, no purpose. I selected some of the groovier volumes from my new shelves, books from my college days that I hoped might help. "Cherish not a thought," Cleobulus the Lindian, one of the Seven Sages of ancient Greece, suggested. "Be superior to pleasure." In theory, sure, but both are problematic for a neurotic with a sweet tooth. "Put forth effort, self-controlled, always with strong resolution," counseled Mahapajapati Gotami, the first Buddhist nun. That was a little more like it, but still, a little insipid sounding, not to mention labor-intensive. I longed for a command as clear as the one Abraham received from the Greatest Shelf Builder of All. Why couldn't I hear it?

There was only one place to look for that answer. Top shelf, dusty volume. "Love and work are the cornerstones of our humanness," read a line attributed to Sigmund Freud.

Love and work. Not a bigger bank account or a shinier watch or a silkier suit. Not a gallon of vanilla milkshakes or an alien-abduction miniseries with rich character development and impressive production values. Not two-inch-thick cypress shelves. Love and work. Simple. Doable. The first I could achieve by practicing kindness, serving others, by being the best son, brother, uncle, and friend possible.

Work? It wasn't the shelves that mattered. I understood that now. It was the building—I mean mounting—of them. It was the work. It was acting with intent, paying attention. "Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water," the Buddhists say, "and after enlightenment, chop wood, carry water."

As long as I created something and did so with care, respect, intention, and humility, and without worrying too much about the outcome—or at least not worrying so much that I forgot the sanctity of the process—I might find purpose. Peace.

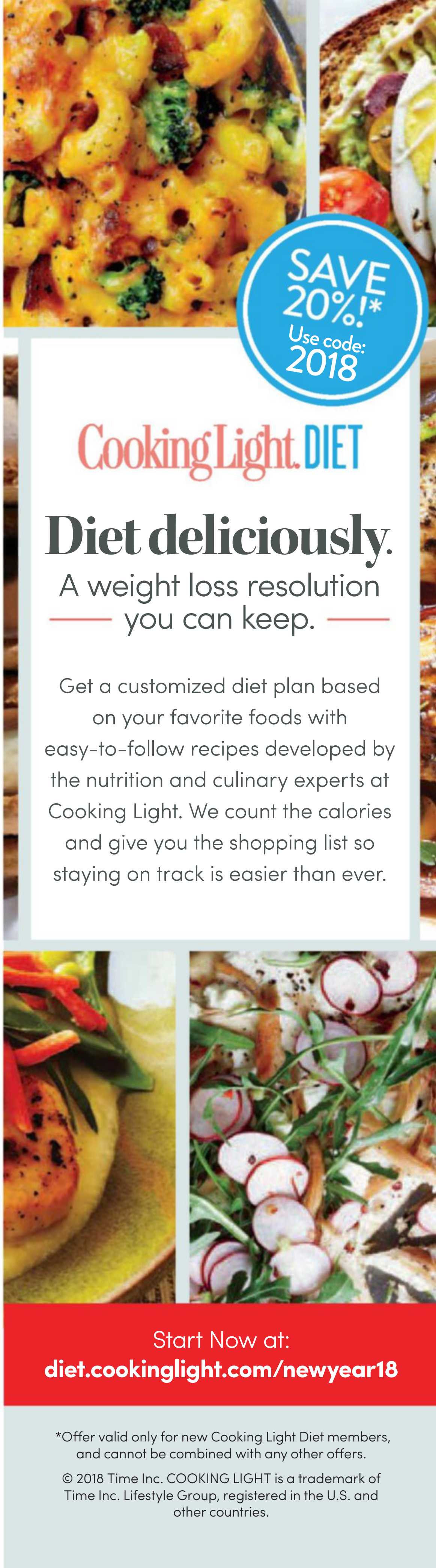
Still, I have no more shelf space.

I'm considering napkin holders.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steve Friedman is the author of four books and a two-time finalist for the National Magazine Award in feature writing. He lives in New York City.

NICK KELSH


SAVE 20%!*
Use code:
2018

Cooking Light DIET

Diet deliciously.
A weight loss resolution you can keep.

Get a customized diet plan based on your favorite foods with easy-to-follow recipes developed by the nutrition and culinary experts at Cooking Light. We count the calories and give you the shopping list so staying on track is easier than ever.

Start Now at:
diet.cookinglight.com/newyear18

*Offer valid only for new Cooking Light Diet members, and cannot be combined with any other offers.

© 2018 Time Inc. COOKING LIGHT is a trademark of Time Inc. Lifestyle Group, registered in the U.S. and other countries.

Modern Manners

***REAL SIMPLE*'S ETIQUETTE EXPERT, CATHERINE NEWMAN, OFFERS HER BEST ADVICE ON YOUR SOCIAL QUANDARIES.**

L.F. ASKS...

We live in a great neighborhood and have made many good friends. We enjoy entertaining and don't mind being the "party house." But one couple keeps inviting their teenagers over at the end of the night to "grab some food." The parties are adults only (sometimes a sit-down dinner), and not even our own teenagers are present. We are surprised that they feel entitled to call over their children to take away the leftovers we might enjoy ourselves. What would be a diplomatic way to handle this?

As the parent of two teenagers, I understand their potential to hoover up food like cartoon elephants. But you've prepared this food with the idea that it might get eaten—so maybe you should, as they say, let it go. If you were asking whether you could invite your own teenagers, of course I'd say no. But you're the host, and I feel that hosts have an extended, nearly extreme obligation to be gracious. If the situation is truly intolerable, I suggest these strategies: (1) Put the food away as soon as the meal is finished and, if asked, explain its designation as lunch box filling. (2) Shift to potlucks, which might make you feel less proprietary about who eats what. (3) Suggest that someone else's house be the teen hangout and chip in for a couple of pizzas. You've got a lovely thing going, so why disrupt it over that last piece of beef Wellington?

ABOUT CATHERINE

The author of *One Mixed-Up Night*, *Catastrophic Happiness*, and *Waiting for Birdy*, Catherine Newman has shared her wisdom on matters ranging from family and friends to happiness and pickling in numerous publications. She gets advice from her husband and two opinionated children in Amherst, Massachusetts.

▲

R.L. ASKS...

My teenage son has been asked by a wealthy friend to accompany him on a family vacation this summer. It's a trip we couldn't afford, and we are grateful. The family has confessed that they treasure a companion for their otherwise bored teen. I will send my son with enough cash to pay for one dinner or make some similar display of gratitude for the trip. Should we offer more cash to the family? Or is it more polite not to?

You have the kind of kid who makes other people's lives easier! How great is that? And totally priceless. But it's also fine to ask directly about the money: "How much cash do you think we should send our son with? Or would it be better if we gave you guys some money up front?" They will likely insist it's not necessary—and you should rest assured, as it sounds like they have plenty of money. Plus, your instincts are spot-on: If you hadn't mentioned it yourself, I would have recommended that your son treat them to a meal, which is a perfectly gracious gesture. Encourage him to be polite and help out (which he doubtless will anyway), and he'll be giving back way more than he takes.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY YOCO NAGAMIYA; CATHERINE NEWMAN ILLUSTRATION BY ULI KNÖRZER

S.W. ASKS...

I recently saw this at a wedding reception: A guest wanted a certain couple to sit at her table and swapped place cards to accomplish this. The couple who were swapped out had no idea which table they were to sit at. I happened to be in the room before the arrival of the other guests and saw her do this. What should I have done?

I read your question out loud and sighed, "Geez, it's a wedding, not middle school," and my daughter reminded me that I'd done the very same thing at a work event, where I was trying to avoid a pretentious CEO who'd advised me that the only way to see *Hamilton* was in orchestra seats, two nights in a row (yawn). Anyhoo, my hypocrisy notwithstanding, those people were wrong to switch place cards because it resulted in confusion and because someone else's wedding is not about you and where you're seated. I might have said to them, "Oh, hey, you guys should let the host know you switched spots, just so she can explain where those other folks should sit." If this gave them pause, so be it. Or maybe I would have said to the host, "Just a heads-up that those guys swapped tables," although that idea gives me a weird tattletaley feeling. Or you could have decided that it was one meal, which everyone would end up figuring out one way or another, regardless.

SUPPORT
DOG

E.S. ASKS...

My brother and his partner have a dog they dishonestly pass off as an emotional-support service animal so they can travel without having to abide by hotel and airline restrictions and fees for pets. We're planning a vacation with our other siblings, their spouses, and our parents. I found us a perfect rental house and signed a contract agreeing to a no-pet policy. My brother wants to bring the dog and claims that their doctor's note exempts them. I am uncomfortable with this, especially since it's my name on the contract. But if they can't bring the dog, they might not come on the trip. Do I stand my ground or cave to keep the family peace?

I consulted my husband, the philosophy PhD, on this one, and he launched into ethics-teacher mode: "What your brother is asking you to do is collude in something that is admittedly dishonest and to take advantage of an exception to a rule that is designed to meet a legitimate need." In other words, it's wrong for your brother to game this particular system and wrong for him to ask you to participate. It's especially galling, of course, because people with real visible or invisible disabilities are now contending with everyone's pretend emotional-support gecko when they show up with their necessary service animals. If your brother doesn't seem to understand this issue, you could try explaining it. And given that he cops to the dishonesty, you don't need to tiptoe: "It's my name on the agreement, and I don't feel comfortable taking advantage of the no-pets exception. Next time, let's find a place that can accommodate everyone's dogs. But for this trip, I think we should look into a nearby pet-friendly motel for you guys." One last question: If your brother feels he can't and won't vacation without his dog, is it perhaps an emotional-support animal after all? I'm just wondering.

HAVE AN ETIQUETTE QUESTION?

Submit it to **modernmanners@realsimple.com.** Selected letters will be featured on these pages every month.

The Vets Will See You Now

ANSWERS TO YOUR HAIRIEST PET QUESTIONS

By Sarah Grossbart

NEW PET PREP

We're considering getting a guinea pig. Is there anything we should be aware of before welcoming one into our family?

Guinea pigs are docile and highly trainable, and they rarely bite, so they make great pets for kids. However, they require more upkeep than you might anticipate based on their small size, says animal trainer Amanda Kaullen. Guinea pigs demand a fibrous diet to keep their constantly growing teeth ground down: While their base food is hay, Kaullen also recommends willow branch chews to help with teeth maintenance. Your pet's enclosure should be cleaned weekly and his nails trimmed monthly. If he gets sick, your guinea pig will likely require treatment from a specialized vet, which could be expensive. But with proper maintenance and care, a guinea pig is likely to make a fun addition to your family.

ROUGH ROAD AHEAD

We're planning a road trip and want to bring our cat, but she hates the car. What can we do to keep her comfortable?

She might literally be sick of the car. "Often when a pet seems anxious, it's because she's nauseous," notes veterinarian Gayle O'Konski. Ask your vet for an antinausea medication or, for truly skittish cats, sedatives. Another option: spraying your cat's crate with calming Ceva Feliway pheromone travel spray ($17; amazon.com). It's also possible that she's afraid of her pet carrier. Veterinary behaviorist Lisa Radosta suggests easing your cat into car rides well ahead of traveling by placing the carrier in the house and feeding her a treat just outside it. Move the treat closer to the crate each time until she finds her way inside. Eventually start closing the door behind her as she eats the treat and taking her for short car rides. It could take weeks (even months), says Radosta, but ultimately "she'll realize something bad won't happen every time she gets in the car."

Fun Find

MUDBUSTER

Avoid the muddy post-walk mess with the help of this little tool. Place water in the reservoir, insert one paw at a time, and twist the cup so the soft silicone bristles work away the grime. Available in three colors and sizes. **TO BUY:** From $15; store.dexas.com.

FACE FACTS

I've heard that a cold, wet nose is a sign of good health in dogs. Is that true? If so, does that mean a warm or dry nose is an indication that something is amiss?

"This is an old wives' tale," says veterinarian Mary Gardner. The moisture and temperature of a dog's nose don't provide any indication of health. In fact, says O'Konski, they change throughout the day depending on the temperature of her environment and level of activity. When playing, for instance, pups are more likely to salivate and leave their nose damp. The one change to note is if a dog's snout gets so dry you see cracks, as it could be a sign of a dermatological issue, zinc deficiency, or lupus. If a week of rubbing Vaseline on the area doesn't help, check in with your vet, suggests Gardner. Otherwise, says O'Konski, "if it's a normal-looking nose, it can be wet, dry, cold, or warm. It's all OK."

THE PET EXPERTS

AUNDRIA DEL PINO, DVM, MARATHON VETERINARY HOSPITAL, MARATHON, FLORIDA **MARY GARDNER, DVM,** LAP OF LOVE VETERINARY HOSPICE, LOS ANGELES **AMANDA KAULLEN,** ANIMAL TRAINER, KIT N CABOODLE PET SERVICES, MILL CREEK, WASHINGTON **EVAN MAVROMATIS, DVM,** THE LINKS ROAD ANIMAL & BIRD CLINIC, TORONTO **GAYLE O'KONSKI, DVM,** MORRIS ANIMAL HOSPITAL, GRANGER, INDIANA **LISA RADOSTA, DVM,** FLORIDA VETERINARY BEHAVIOR SERVICE, WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA

GK & VIKKI HART/GETTY IMAGES; PRODUCT IMAGE COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER

Set your dog free from grains with
BLUE Freedom.

Love them like family. Feed them like family.
Healthy
Holistic
BLUE
FREEDOM
GRAIN-FREE
Free of Grains, Glutens and Artificial Preservatives
ADULT
CHICKEN RECIPE FOR DOGS
with LifeSource Bits

Made with only the highest quality ingredients and none of the grains that contain gluten, BLUE Freedom® is grain-free at its finest.

We all want our dogs and cats to look and feel their best. For some of our furry friends, that means being on a grain-free diet, which is why we created BLUE Freedom.

It always features real meat – and has none of the grains that contain gluten. Plus, BLUE Freedom has no corn, wheat or soy and no artificial flavors or preservatives.

If you think your dog or cat can do better on a grain-free diet, you can't do better than BLUE Freedom.

SetYourPetsFree.com

Available for dogs and cats at your favorite pet specialty store.

Open your heart & home this holiday

Adopt a pet near you at
home4theholidays.org

BLUE BUFFALO
BLUE
HOME 4 THE HOLIDAYS
HELEN WOODWARD ANIMAL CENTER

Love them like family. Feed them like family.®

©2017 Blue Buffalo Co., Ltd.

TRADITIONAL MEDICINALS®
SINCE 1974
wellness teas
Chamomile with Lavender
Throat Coat
Roasted Dandelion Root
Herbal Supplement

Plant power for a better you.®

Lovingly created by herbalists and rigorously tested for quality by botanical experts, our herbal teas help you soothe, relax and restore your way through any day. Serving people, plants and planet since 1974.

©2017 Traditional Medicinals 170739

Your Sick Day Survival Guide

When your child wakes up with a fever, life gets messy in a hurry. Suddenly you're rearranging your schedule, backing out of plans, and frantically trying to keep yourself healthy. Here's how to stay calm—and gainfully employed—while serving as nurse, chef, and playmate to your adorable but highly contagious offspring.

By Elizabeth Jenkins

1

Contain the germs

Since 80 percent of infections are passed through direct and indirect contact (getting sneezed on, sharing utensils, even cuddling), this is the perfect time to get in touch with your inner clean freak.

WITH ALL THE BODILY functions going on in there, the bathroom can be ground zero for germs. If possible, give your sick child her own designated bathroom for the duration of her illness, especially if there's vomiting or diarrhea involved, suggests Philip M. Tierno Jr., PhD, professor of microbiology and pathology at NYU School of Medicine. "If it's necessary for the child to share a bathroom, disinfect it after each use," he advises. Keep a pack of disinfectant wipes in the bathroom to clean down the toilet seat, flusher, and faucet. Melissa Slawsky, a mom in Orlando, Florida, keeps her sick kid from passing germs around the family by replacing hand towels with a roll of disposable paper towels.

GERMS CAN ALSO spread when you pick up those used tissues that inevitably pile up all over the house. One mom's clever solution: "My kids carry their own tissue box around, as well as a plastic baggie so they can dispose of their used tissues," says Fairuz Abdullah, a mother of twins in San Francisco.

THE IMPORTANCE OF handwashing can't be overstated. "It's not a guarantee you won't get sick, but it's the best and simplest way to help prevent germs from getting

Illustrations by Dermot Flynn

on—and into—you," says Claire McCarthy, MD, a pediatrician at Boston Children's Hospital. Make sure everyone washes their hands after using the bathroom, before eating and drinking, and before touching their face, says Tierno. (Try the Honest Company's Foaming Hand Soap in kid-fave Coastal Surf scent; company founder Jessica Alba says she keeps it in her daughters' bathroom to encourage frequent handwashing.)

USE SANITIZING WIPES on anything that's handled by multiple people, including the phone, TV remote, and doorknob. "Common colds can spread through germs on these surfaces," explains Wendy Sue Swanson, MD, a pediatrician at Seattle Children's Hospital.

TAKE YOUR CHILD to the pediatrician while his sibs are in school, even if the timing means your regular doc isn't available. That way the kids won't have to ride in the car together, and you won't expose your healthy children to other germs at the doctor's office.

TO COMFORT YOUR CHILD, "do an air-kiss or high five without touching," suggests McCarthy. "When you're snuggling on the couch, put a giant stuffed animal or two between you." If you can't resist a kiss, skip the cheek and go for the top of the head—it's less likely to spread germs.

2

Rally your team

Even on a sick day, you may have to get work done and keep the rest of your household functioning. Don't try this alone.

AS SOON AS YOU know your kid is down for the count, huddle with your partner if you have one. Can one of you work from home today, or can you both shuffle your schedules so one takes the morning off and the other takes the afternoon? Are there any meetings, volunteer commitments, or appointments you can cancel? If you're staying home, call or email your boss with a detailed plan. "Let her know how long you expect to be out, what you can do from home, and who in the office can best handle anything that needs to be covered in your absence," advises Lucia Gilbert, PhD, professor emerita of psychology at Santa Clara University.

IF STAYING HOME isn't an option, go down your mental (or, even better, written) list of friends, family, or sitters you can call on in a pinch. Need to update that list? Spend your day at home checking out online sitter-matching services, such as eNannySource.com, SitterCity.com, or Care.com, which, for a fee, can connect you with a local Mary Poppins.

CALL IN FAVORS from other parents. While you're home with your convalescing child, your other kids still need to get to their soccer games and dance lessons. "It truly takes a village to raise a child, and I always squash my independent spirit and ask for help when one of the kids is sick," says Supna Shah, a mother of triplets in Tampa, Florida. She keeps a call list ready so she can ask another parent to chauffeur her healthy kids to activities.

OUTSOURCE ERRANDS. There's always going to be a prescription or groceries you need to pick up, but taking a sick kid out, unless it's to go to the doctor, is never a great idea, says McCarthy. Ask a friend to help or splurge for delivery. (GetMyRx.com delivers prescriptions from independent pharmacies in 35 states.)

3

Keep your kid rested and entertained

Sleep time is crucial for getting better, but Murphy's Law states that your child will perk up and want to play just at the moment you have an important conference call.

WHEN YOUR CHILD is ill, it's fine to ignore recommendations about limiting screen time. "While we want to instill good digital habits, there are only so many things to feel guilty about," says Swanson. "Letting your child rest and be distracted from their illness seems reasonable."

IF YOU NEED to make a work call, save screen time for that part of the day. If you need more time than a nap or a viewing of *Moana* allows, set up a work space separate from the recovery room and tell your child that you'll check in every 30 minutes but that it would be so helpful for Mommy if he called for you only if he felt truly awful. "I fill the kids' room with so many movies, books, and drinks that they never want to leave!" says Melanie Ulle, a mother of two in Denver.

WHEN YOUR KID gets tired of back-to-back episodes of *SpongeBob,* he's going to want some entertainment, but playing Go Fish or Monopoly means sharing cards, dice, and, yes, germs, so have a roster of "no-touch" activities ready to go. "I pull out a craft my kids don't do very often so it will keep their attention," says Jean Brillman, a mother of two in Philadelphia whose sick-day kit includes Kinetic Sand, pipe cleaners, and beads. "I set them up on the sofa with a tray where they can do their activity while resting, and there's minimal sharing involved." Other favorite activities that don't involve swapping germs or expending too much energy: playing I Spy, sorting through old art projects to create a book (check plumprint.com for ideas), and tuning in to audiobooks (listening to Jim Dale narrate the Harry Potter series will make any kid feel magically better).

PROVIDE HEALTHY yet easy-on-the-tummy snacks, such as smoothies and oatmeal. "Our favorite is a piece of toast with sliced bananas cut into quarters, a scoop of peanut butter, and a spoonful of honey," says Karen Smoots, a mom of two in Portage, Michigan.

4

The aftermath

Hopefully, your child will be back on her feet within a few days. But you may need to recover yourself. Use this time to clean out the house, take care of yourself, and perfect your sick-day plan for next time.

DESPITE ALL YOUR BEST efforts, you may very well spend the next few days fighting off whatever your child passed on to you. Give yourself a few days to recover. "I divide my life into segments—me, my partner, my kids, my job, and my housework—and make decisions on what's a crucial task and what can wait," says Eirene Heidelberger, founder and president of GITMom, a parenting-coaching company. "Vacuuming can wait. Long-term projects can wait."

DEEP-CLEAN YOUR house after everyone heals. Don't forget to scrub the toilets, replace the sick person's toothbrush, strip the beds, and throw all sheets, blankets, pajamas, towels, and stuffed animals into the wash.

WHEN YOU'VE HAD a few days to get everyone back on their regular schedule, think about what you can do to make the next sick day go more smoothly. If you had a child-care emergency, interview sitters. Work glitch? Talk to tech support about the best way to log in from home. Stock your freezer with the foods your feverish kids craved.

BREATHE. Sick days happen. And they may give you the gift of uninterrupted bonding time you rarely get to enjoy on your healthier—but much busier—days.

For more on how to entertain a kid stuck at home, go to **realsimple.com/sickday.**

Emirates
EXPO 2020 DUBAI UAE
OFFICIAL PREMIER PARTNER
Give new meaning to
FAMILY TIME
in Dubai
DON'T JUST VISIT, LIVE IT.
Emirates

From white sandy beaches to spectacular water parks, a world of family fun awaits you in Dubai. Book your flight today at emirates.com/us

Hello Tomorrow

WORK, MONEY, AND HEALTH
ADVICE FOR BUSY PEOPLE

balance

YES, YOU CAN PULL OFF A SABBATICAL

You need a break from work. Not just a vacation but something longer and more meaningful. Work-life experts and sabbatical veterans share the steps to make it happen, get your boss on board, and come back refreshed.

By Michelle Shih

DESIGN PICS/OFFSET

1

Pinpoint the motivation.

"I knew I needed a sabbatical when I realized I hadn't really laughed—belly laughed—in three years," says Amira El-Gawly, an organizational culture consultant in Washington, D.C. Sound familiar? If you think you might want a break from work—like El-Gawly, who took a three-month sabbatical in 2016 from her full-time position at a marketing firm—the first step is to consider what you might get out of taking one, says Dave Evans, coauthor of *Designing Your Life.* Are you burned-out and need to recharge? Do you want to do something you can't fit into a shorter vacation—say, bike across Cambodia to raise money for charity? Maybe you have a side hustle you want to give more attention to or have always wanted to write a family history. Even if there's more than one factor, you'll want to think about what you want from a sabbatical.

2

Map out logistics.

Start your planning process 7 to 10 months from when you'd like to take time off, says Pat Katepoo, a flexible-work adviser at WorkOptions.com and author of the e-book *How to Get Six Weeks Off to Travel: A Complete Negotiation Guide.* Take a look at company policies—5 percent of U.S. companies offer a paid sabbatical, while 12 percent offer an unpaid version, according to the 2017 Employee Benefits report by the Society for Human Resource Management. If your workplace doesn't have a policy, plan out what you want to accomplish, then build in time on either end as a buffer to help you transition into the sabbatical and return to work. If your goal has flexibility, "six weeks is a magic number," says David Bach, author of *The Automatic Millionaire,* who is working on a book about sabbaticals. "It's a good chunk of time for an individual but not so long that the employer can't manage it." To lower the cost of the sabbatical, you'll want to do your best to minimize expenses. For example, if your company has a sabbatical policy, see whether you'll continue to get health insurance while you're away. If not, try to negotiate for it (see step four) but also research short-term plans or travel health insurance if you are, say, planning to climb Mount Everest. Also, some companies offer paid time off for volunteer work, so if your sabbatical involves service, you might be able to transfer those paid hours.

CAVAN IMAGES

3

Develop a contingency plan.

You'll need to get a trusted co-worker on board who will agree to cover necessary work and be a point of contact for emergencies while you're gone, says Katepoo. Reveal your plans in confidence and offer a quid pro quo as part of your discussion. Also, arrange for secure remote access to your work computer so you can test it before proposing your sabbatical to your boss. You won't want to be in touch while you're gone if you can help it, but having access to work files will help sell the idea and show you've taken emergencies into account.

4

Ask your boss for permission.

"The key is not to say, 'I want to take six weeks off starting tomorrow,'" says Bach. "The key is to say, 'I want to take six weeks off, and I would like to work with you on a plan to make that happen. It won't be disruptive at all to the business. If anything, it will leave the business in a better position than before I was gone." Talk to your boss at least three months before your planned departure date, says Katepoo. Prepare a written proposal that contains your work coverage plan, including the name of the person who has already agreed to help you, and the benefits to the company. You'll want to ask in person, but have the proposal in hand to guide the conversation. "Don't focus on the 'me' case, but the 'we' case," says Katepoo. "Say, 'I'll be more productive and have more energy when I come back.'" Use other companies' policies as examples if your boss is unfamiliar with sabbaticals (see yoursabbatical.com) and don't assume that the time off will be unpaid or that you won't be able to keep your health insurance. Rehearse the conversation ahead of time with a friend or trusted coworker, which will help you anticipate the emotions you'll feel as well as pushback you might get. Sweeten the ask by agreeing to give a presentation on your experience to colleagues when you return.

Don't say, "I want to take six weeks off starting tomorrow." The key is to say, "I want to take six weeks off, and I would like to work with you on a plan to make that happen."

5

Prep for your absence.

Once you have the go-ahead, create a manual that includes a troubleshooting section so the office won't need to contact you. Cross-train your coworkers, and for any project that will continue while you're away, loop in people early in the process. "I gently ushered in my team, so they knew how to take over," says Megan McIntyre, a freelance beauty writer and consultant in New York City who took a four-week company-sponsored sabbatical from the website Refinery29 in 2016. Done properly, the sabbatical leaves the business with a tested contingency plan, says Bach. And since there's no law that protects your job while you're on sabbatical, it shows your worth, and your boss will be relieved when you return.

6

Step away—especially from technology.

Making the decision to truly disconnect was key, says McIntyre. At the airport at the start of her sabbatical, she was thinking about deleting her work email from her phone. "My finger was hovering," she says. "My friend made me push it, and it was gone." El-Gawly had a similar experience, giving up all contact with the office. "I realized what I missed, what I didn't miss, and what I wanted to create from scratch," she says. The key is to be intentional with your days. El-Gawly created rituals like doing a daily writing exercise as soon as she woke up in the morning, a technique she picked up from the book *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron, which helped her focus on living in the moment. And every week or so, reassess to ensure you're still working toward your goals.

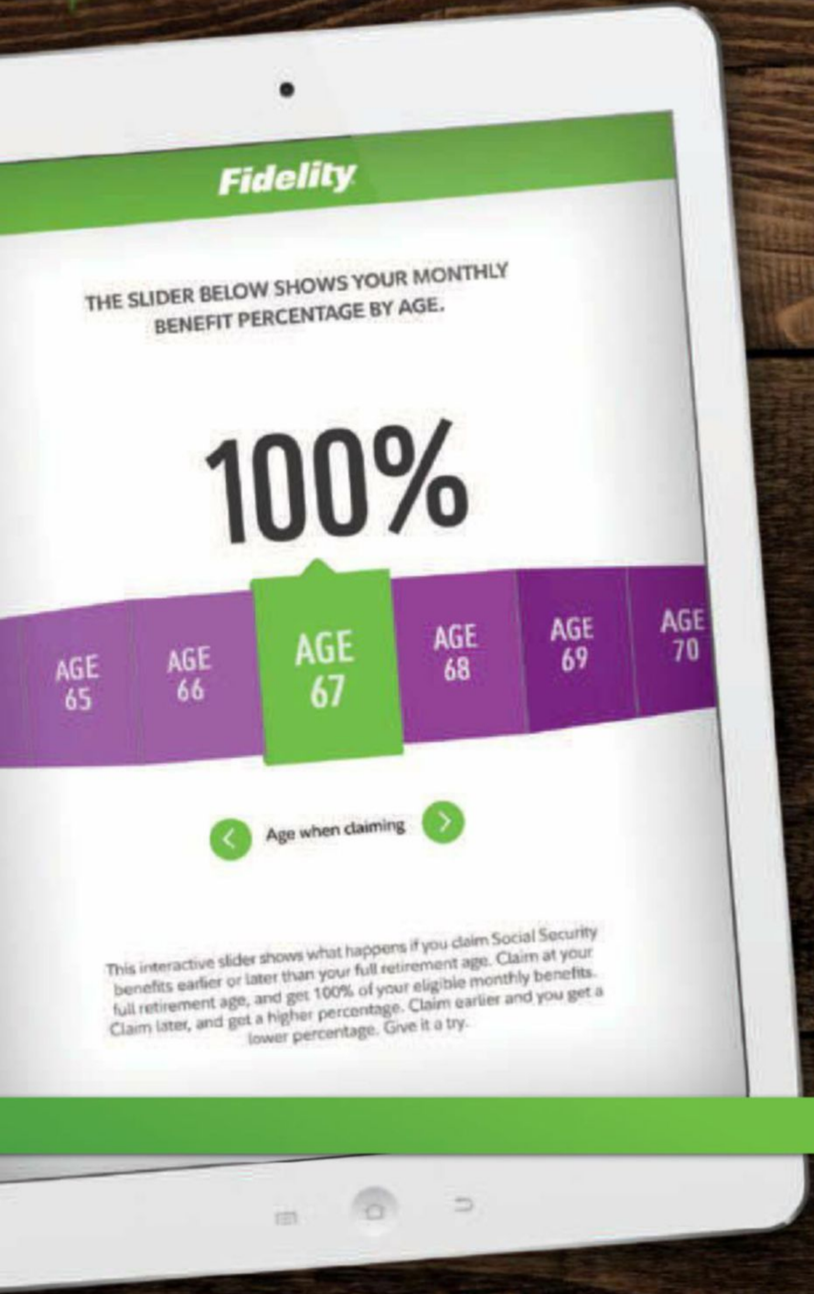
7

Plan your reentry.

Three to seven days before your return date, start going through emails. Talk to the coworkers who supplied the most coverage to learn about major issues that came up while you were out, suggests Katepoo. Then do the same with your boss and confirm when you'll be back in the office. Bring a small, thoughtful gift for coworkers who helped you out and take them to lunch as a thank-you. And make sure you deliver on the promise that you'd add more to the company when you returned, refreshed and reinvigorated, so it will make the sabbatical a success for everyone involved. For Bach, who took his sabbatical almost four years ago, the effects are still evident. "Even today I'm rushing around, I have a million things on my plate, but I have a different mind-set," he says. "I'm way more clear about what's important to me. The sabbatical didn't recharge my battery; it replaced my battery."

Eliminate the guesswork.

Get a clear picture of when to claim Social Security.



Fidelity

THE SLIDER BELOW SHOWS YOUR MONTHLY BENEFIT PERCENTAGE BY AGE.

100%

This interactive slider shows what happens if you claim Social Security benefits earlier or later than your full retirement age. Claim at your full retirement age, and get 100% of your eligible monthly benefits. Claim later, and get a higher percentage. Claim earlier and you get a lower percentage. Give it a try.

At Fidelity, we have the tools and expertise to help you manage Social Security.

- Determine when to claim and how much you may receive with our Social Security benefits calculator
- See how Social Security fits into your broader retirement savings goals in the Planning & Guidance Center

It's your retirement. Know where you stand.

Fidelity INVESTMENTS

800.FIDELITY | Fidelity.com/SSCalculator

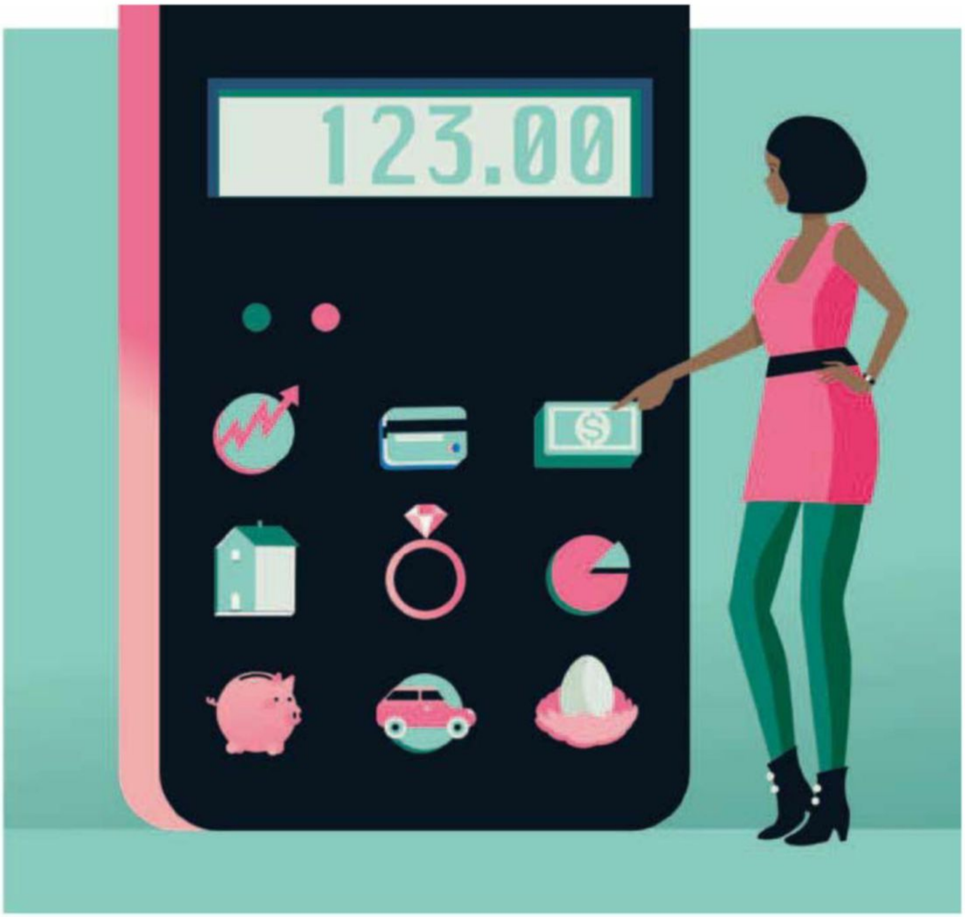
Investing involves risk, including the risk of loss.

This calculator is for illustrative purposes only.

Fidelity does not provide legal or tax advice. The information herein is general and educational in nature and should not be considered financial, legal, or tax advice. Fidelity cannot guarantee that the information herein is accurate, complete, or timely. Fidelity makes no warranties with regard to such information or results obtained by its use, and disclaims any liability arising out of your use of, or reliance on, such information. Visit www.ssa.gov when you're ready to learn more about filing and about your personalized Social Security statement and estimated benefit.

The trademarks and/or service marks appearing above are the property of FMR LLC and may be registered.

Fidelity Brokerage Services LLC, Member NYSE, SIPC. © 2017 FMR LLC. All rights reserved. 812677.1.0



Looking Forward

Give Yourself a Money Checkup

WANT TO FEEL MORE IN CONTROL, FINANCIALLY SPEAKING? THESE ARE THE SIX NUMBERS YOU NEED TO KNOW.

By Kate Rockwood

You see your doctor at least once a year, take your car to the mechanic, set a reminder to spring-clean the house. So why not give your financial health the same annual attention? "Digging through your numbers isn't an exercise in judgment—it's a way to make sure there are no surprises and to set intentions for the future," says Manisha Thakor, founder of MoneyZen Financial Education in Portland, Oregon, and coauthor of *Get Financially Naked.* Here's how to assess your financial situation so you'll be able to see which areas are going strong—and which might need some TLC.

Net Worth

KNOW YOUR NUMBER: Tally your assets first: How much do you have in your bank accounts? What are the current balances on your retirement and investment portfolios? How much would your home fetch if you put it on the market tomorrow? Then tally what you owe, like your mortgage, student loans, credit card debts, and auto loan. That first total minus the second equals your net worth.

WHAT TO DO NEXT: "You're checking for two things: that it's not negative and that it's trending upward," says Thakor. If you've never calculated your net worth before, think of this as your benchmark. Wealth doesn't have to grow in a perfectly straight line—maybe one year the real estate market dips or your stock portfolio stumbles—but you want to do everything you can to nudge this number higher. Of course, if your salary and spending are in lockstep, your net worth can't rise much. To get things growing, you can either get more money (negotiate a pay raise, start a side project) or hold on to more of what you make (through savings or investing). Or—ideally—do both!

Illustrations by Pietari Posti

Take-Home Pay

KNOW YOUR NUMBER: You know your salary, but how much do you actually bring home? “People aren’t intimate with that number and tend to overestimate how much they make after taxes,” says Rachel Rabinovich, director of financial planning at the Society of Grownups, a finance-education group in Brookline, Massachusetts. Peek at your payslip and note the frequency. Biweekly means you get 26 checks a year; bimonthly means just 24.

WHAT TO DO NEXT: Now that you know how much you take home, make sure you use that money to support your goals. Thakor is a fan of the 50-30-20 rule: Half your take-home pay should go toward needs, 30 percent toward wants, and 20 percent toward savings and debt repayment. “Most people are far below with savings and far above with wants,” she says, so don’t panic if your budget seems out of whack. But any progress you can make is worth it.

763

Credit Scores

KNOW YOUR NUMBER: Three main credit bureaus—Experian, TransUnion, and Equifax—maintain your history, which financial-analysis firms, like FICO and Vantage, use to crunch your score. Get your score through Experian at freecreditscore.com or discover.com (even if you’re not a Discover cardholder).

WHAT TO DO NEXT: Go to annualcreditreport.com for free credit reports from all three bureaus. You’ll find details on anything that might be dragging down your score. Check for errors—according to the Federal Trade Commission, one in five disputed reports contains one, and while most are minor flubs (like incorrect addresses), 20 percent of identified errors are big enough to lift a score once corrected. If your report is error-free, know that the surest ways to buoy your score are to pay bills on time and whittle down your debt.

Mortgage Rate

KNOW YOUR NUMBER: If you bought your home with an adjustable-rate mortgage, the interest rate will change annually after the initial set period of three, five, or seven years. Whether it jumps or slumps is beyond your control, but you’ll want to be prepared if you’re staring down an increase. “Make sure your rate is competitive, even if you have a fixed-rate mortgage,” says Thakor.

WHAT TO DO NEXT: Refinancing is all about running the numbers to figure out whether the monthly savings of a lower mortgage is worth the paperwork and loan fees. Bankrate offers a comprehensive online calculator. If refinancing seems to make financial sense, talk to your mortgage lender or compare offers from the bumper crop of online sites (Lenda, Better Mortgage, SoFi, and Quicken).

Credit Card Interest Rates

KNOW YOUR NUMBER: The average American household with credit card debt has a balance of $16,748, per NerdWallet’s latest annual survey. Take stock of your IOUs: Log on to each credit company site and rank your interest rates from highest to lowest.

WHAT TO DO NEXT: Finance pros might hem and haw about when and whether it makes sense to pay off your mortgage or student loans early, but nearly everyone agrees that credit card debt is a hair-on-fire type of priority. Make at least the minimum payments on all your accounts and throw any extra money toward the card with the steepest interest rate. Once that card is paid off, focus on the next-highest rate. And the minute you’re finally out of debt, shift that monthly outlay to savings, says Thakor. You won’t feel a difference in your budget, but you will in your net worth.

For eight surprising ways to save your credit score, go to **realsimple.com/creditscore.**

Savings

KNOW YOUR NUMBER: Your savings should mimic your financial goals, spanning both the short and long term. To see if that’s true, check the balances on your emergency savings and retirement portfolio.

WHAT TO DO NEXT: Depending on your financial situation, three to six months of living expenses is the goal for rainy-day savings, but that amount may seem lofty for most, says Rabinovich. To move toward it, tally nonnegotiable expenses. (Mortgage, groceries, insurance? Yes. Clothes, travel, entertainment? Nope.) That number reflects your vital living expenses, and socking away even a month’s worth will give peace of mind. As for retirement, saving 15 percent of your salary is ideal. If you aren’t there, consider bumping your contribution by just 1 percent. It won’t feel like much now, but it will add up later.

always
ULTRA THIN
1
2
3
4
5

60% OF WOMEN WEAR THE WRONG SIZE PAD.
100% OF THEM CAN CHANGE THAT.

Discover Always My Fit™ - a range of pads for every shape and flow.
Look on the top of any Always pack to find your fit with My Fit.

Rewrite the Rules
always

© Procter & Gamble, 2018

Making It Work

What's your resolution to achieve better work-life balance in 2018?

By Jane Porter

This year, I want to make sure I'm carving out some time for my wife and me. We just had our second child. When we had our first, we didn't have a plan for date night and went nearly a year without one. This time around, I want to have a strategy in place to spend time together away from our children. That means not being shy about asking friends for help when we need it, having a roster of babysitters, and taking advantage of the opportunity when relatives are in town.

FAIZ SHAKIR, 38, NATIONAL POLITICAL DIRECTOR FOR THE ACLU, WASHINGTON, D.C.

I resolve to forgo resolutions in favor of a kinder and gentler approach to my own growth. I want to see meeting my goals as an ongoing process, the way I encourage my students to. Instead of making a rigid resolution, like "Every Saturday I will not work at all," I'd rather focus on finding ways to spend quality time with my family. As a teacher, I don't always remember to treat myself with the same patience that I teach my students. There will always be a stack of work that needs to be graded or a lesson that needs to be planned. I may never get my to-do list down to zero, but setting realistic expectations is a start.

SYDNEY CHAFFEE, 34, HIGH SCHOOL HUMANITIES TEACHER, 2017 NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR, BOSTON

For me, this is going to be the year of meditation. It scares me to think, "Can I do just one thing and one thing only?" So I'm not going to beat myself up if I try it and it's not right for me. I don't really have a lot of free time, so when I do, I really try to make the most of it. In the past few years, I've resolved to try to learn new things—playing the piano one year, scuba diving another. Making this time for myself every day if I can has been a critical linchpin in managing my energy.

MARY DILLON, 56, CEO OF ULTA BEAUTY, BOLINGBROOK, ILLINOIS

I'd like to be better at disconnecting from my career life when it's time to do that. I have two full-time jobs: I teach in a master's program and work as a nurse practitioner. It's about turning off that part of my brain and those questions that keep lurking and spinning in the back of my mind while I'm with my family. I have four kids at home, and they can tell when I'm distracted. The physical disconnection of not having your phone in your hand is obvious, but the other piece is about being mindful of the energy going to other things.

KIMBERLY KANE, 37, NURSE PRACTITIONER, R.I. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, CRANSTON, RHODE ISLAND

Over the past year, I've been trying to slow things down a bit. I have two young kids—an 8-year-old and a 5-year-old. I used to feel like I had to be the first one into the office every morning. Now, two days a week, I run in the park before work, and I take my kids to school the three other days. Committing to one-on-one time with each of them every week has been a real goal for me. It could be just getting breakfast together, working in the garden, or heading outside with the scooters. Being there for those little moments means a lot.

DAVID SEITER, 41, PRINCIPAL OF FUTURE GREEN, LANDSCAPE DESIGN AND URBAN ECOLOGY FIRM, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

For five expert-approved tips on how to make time for yourself, visit **realsimple.com/metime.**

FROM LEFT: COURTESY OF GETTY; COURTESY OF SYDNEY CHAFFEE; COURTESY OF MARY DILLON; COURTESY OF KIMBERLY KANE; COURTESY OF FUTURE GREEN

Illustration by Andrea Mongia

HAPPY PAWS VET CLINIC

Owner:
Jane Smith
123 ABC Street
New York, NY 10001

Patient:
Essie, Golden Retriever
Born: 12/25/14
Weight: 70 pounds

INVOICE SUBTOTAL

Tooth Extraction.................................. $829.00

PetHERO DISCOUNT 25% OFF

- $207.25

$621.75

TOTAL DUE TODAY **$621.75**

Introducing PetHero™, your cure for costly vet bills.

PetHero™ is a savings program, *not insurance.*
Now you can conquer the cost of pet ownership.
Learn how.

www.PetHero.com/RealSimple

© 2017 Time Inc. PetHero is a registered trademark of Time Inc.

SICK OF PHONY HEALTH EXPERTS?

When searching for real health advice, you shouldn't have to trust your gut. Trust magazine brands instead.

Whether in print, online, on mobile or video, people believe magazine media more than any other. No wonder it's more engaging and drives more healthcare and pharmaceutical actions. Magazines have expertly researched content and a safe environment that makes everyone feel a whole lot better.

MAGAZINE MEDIA

Better. Believe It.

#BelieveMagMedia | BelieveMagMedia.com

Sources: Simmons Research, Multi-Media Engagement Study, Spring 2016; Kantar Media, MARS Consumer Health Study, 2016.

Get Organized for Better Health

RESOLVED TO BE ACTIVE, EAT SMART, OR TACKLE STRESS? THESE SMALL CHANGES TO YOUR PERSONAL SPACE WILL GET THINGS ROLLING.

By Leslie Goldman

Doctors and professional organizers may seem like strange bedfellows, but with research linking our environment and our health, how we arrange our homes can be the difference between whether we gain or lose weight, rock or skip a workout, and leave work happy or stressed.

"You need to strategically organize in a way that makes it easier to achieve your goals," says psychologist and former personal trainer Susan Rudnicki, PhD, of Dunwoody, Georgia. So if the chips are blocking the whole grains in your ultratidy pantry, you're only halfway there. We got advice from health experts and organizing pros to help you hit all your wellness goals this year.

PAVLEN/GETTY IMAGES

Fitness Gear

HANG A WORKOUT-CLOTHES STATION IN YOUR CLOSET. Organizing blogger Katie Maris Pyle of Olympia, Washington, fills each slot in a fabric hanging shoe organizer with a complete workout outfit—shirt, shorts, sports bra, and socks. Nearby: a bin filled with the hair ties, sunglasses, earbuds, pepper spray, and spare house key she takes on her runs. "I used to wake up intending to exercise, but when I couldn't find clean clothes, I never made it out," she says. "Now I have no excuses."

BE PREPARED. Keep sneakers and spare workout clothes in the trunk of your car (or your go-everywhere tote) to take advantage of spur-of-the-moment fitness opportunities. "This way, if an appointment cancels or you're driving by a beautiful park and have some time, you can squeeze in a workout," says Rudnicki.

SET UP A SYSTEM FOR DEALING WITH GYM CLOTHES. Keep your gym bag in the laundry room, suggests Leslie Josel, owner of Order Out of Chaos, an organizing company in Westchester, New York. As soon as you return from the gym, toss your sweaty clothes directly into the washing machine—and once they're clean and dry, put them back in the bag. "If something takes a lot of steps, you're less likely to do it," she says. "With your bag already packed, that's one less step to get yourself out the door." (Plus, you'll thwart mold spores, which can begin multiplying in damp gear in just 24 hours.)

LOULOUVONGLUP/GETTY IMAGES

INVEST IN GEAR YOU LOVE. When it comes to fitness success, clothes truly do make the woman. In one business school study, subjects who donned white doctor's coats performed better on attention-related tasks than subjects who didn't wear the coats. When subjects were told the same coat was a painter's uniform, performance did not improve. This powerful effect on performance, called "enclothed cognition," is the reason you naturally assume the best-dressed woman in your yoga class knows what she's doing. "If you feel confident and athletic, you'll want to work harder," says Rudnicki. The clothes needn't be expensive or trendy; they just need to make you feel good.

STOCK YOUR OTTOMAN. You already love ottomans for their ability to pull double duty; what about stashing your home workout gear inside? With dumbbells, resistance bands, and a jump rope hidden there, all you need to do is grab your gear, push the ottoman aside, and turn on your favorite at-home workout video.

ROLL THE RIGHT WAY. Illness can upend a workout groove. Make it to every class by rolling your yoga mat to minimize contact with the foot fungus, wart virus, and other germs that can live on studio floors. Rolling your mat from one end to the other puts whatever was on the floor underneath you in contact with the top of the mat and you, says Sophie Uliano, a certified yoga instructor in Los Angeles. Instead, stand near your unrolled mat, grab the edge closest to you, and fold it in half, toward the top. Next, grab the fold and roll it forward so the top stays clean and protected. Stash it inside a sling until your next class.

In the Kitchen

PUT GOOD-FOR-YOU FOOD ON DISPLAY. Berries, cucumbers, and other produce get easily buried (or smooshed) in your refrigerator's deep drawer. "When you open it, you only see what's on top, in front, or at eye level," says Maureen Guzman, owner of Katy Home Organizer in Katy, Texas. "And people don't eat what they can't see." She recommends using clear plastic bins on fridge shelves to store smaller and more delicate produce; stash bulky produce or even loaves of bread in the deep drawer. And pull some of that fruit out of the fridge: A Cornell study found that women with a visible fruit bowl on the counter weighed about 13 pounds less than those without.

UPDATE YOUR SPICE CABINET. Most American adults fall short of the approximate recommended 2 to 3½ cups of vegetables a day. Spices and herbs–think curry, ginger, garlic, and rosemary–can make veggies taste more appealing while reducing the need for sodium and fat when they're cooked. To keep spices top of mind (and at peak flavor), Nonnahs Driskill, founding organizer of Get Organized Already in Pasadena, California, recommends tossing old and expired seasonings, buying new, bagged spices and herbs (they're cheaper than bottled ones), and decanting them into clean, labeled jars or containers.

CLEAR THE COUNTERTOPS. A cluttered kitchen can bring on the munchies: A study published in *Environment and Behavior* found that women in a messy kitchen ate twice as many cookies as women in the same kitchen when it was organized and quiet. Being in a chaotic space makes you think, "I can't keep anything straight; why should I even try?" notes Rudnicki. Set a timer for 25 minutes–the ideal time for maximizing focus and efficiency–and start cleaning. Not only might it limit stress eating, but a study out of Indiana University found that people with clean houses are more active than those with messy ones, probably because all that scrubbing and sweeping counts as physical exercise.

Little tweaks can pay off big. Try one or all of our "15 Small Changes for a Leaner, Healthier You" at **realsimple.com/smallchanges.**

REORGANIZE YOUR CABINETS. Make it easier to eat nutritious foods by reserving the easy-to-reach middle shelves for beans, canned veggies, oatmeal, and nuts. Then put "sometimes" foods on a high shelf or in a seldom-used pantry, suggests Driskill. Likewise, keep the spiralizer, blender, vegetable steamer, and sparkling water maker front and center; push the ice cream maker and deep fryer to the back of the cupboard.

HANG AN ANALOG CLOCK. Does getting everyone out the door in the morning leave you frenzied, with no time to eat breakfast? An old-fashioned clock can jump-start the day you deserve. "Digital clocks only tell you one time—the present," explains Josel. "An analog clock makes you more time-aware; the sweep of the hands shows how much time has elapsed and how much you have left." Not only will you leave the house less anxious, but better time management might grant you the extra minutes you need for breakfast, which studies have linked with a reduced risk of diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

FROM TOP: TOMAP49/GETTY IMAGES; INGEMAR LINDEWALL/GETTY IMAGES

At the Office

MOVE YOUR DESK. We tend to position our desks near a window, for both natural light and the chance to tap nature as our muse. But light streaming in from behind the computer screen can lead to eye fatigue. And if your back is facing the window, sunlight can wash out images on the screen, making you squint. Reorient your space so windows run alongside the desk and computer screen.

ROTATE VISUAL INSPIRATION. In a survey of LinkedIn professionals conducted by the photo-art company CanvasPop, 77 percent said art in their work space made them feel happier, 74 percent said it made them feel more inspired, and 37 percent said it made them feel more relaxed. That framed Frida Kahlo photo or "Today is tomorrow's yesterday" quote can totally pump you up—until it doesn't. "If you keep the same ones up too long, they lose their spice and turn into white noise," says Driskill. Rotate in new artwork or sayings every few weeks to engage your brain and stay motivated.

ORGANIZE BY TIME FRAME. Clutter overwhelms the visual cortex, the area of the brain that processes visual information. A messy desk, then, means your brain has to work harder just to accomplish the same tasks. Josel recommends dividing your desk elements into past, present, and future. The past is anything you don't regularly use (old but important papers, for instance); move those items to a file cabinet or storage box. Prime desk real estate goes to the present—things you need now, like your computer, pens, journals, paper. Direct future gear (extra supplies, stationery) to a nearby shelf or bookcase.

A reassuring caveat: Achieving a totally clear desk isn't just difficult; it may be counter-productive. "We need a certain amount of clutter to operate normally," says Princeton University neuroscientist Sabine Kastner, MD, PhD. "A completely sterile desk area is depressing—the brain needs some stimulation to be productive."

ADVERTISEMENT

Sparkle
& SHINE

Introducing the new collection from Real Simple Style, a beautifully designed line of festive clutches that will make a statement–this season and beyond.

REALSIMPLESTYLE.COM

20% OFF
WITH CODE
SIMPLESTYLE
VALID 1/1/18–2/1/18

Amanda Drop
Earring $45

Marilyn Envelope
Clutch $108

rs.
REAL SIMPLE™
STYLE

PAUL SIRISALEE/OFFSET

Ahhh...

Most yoga practices end with 5 or 10 minutes of savasana, a resting pose that allows the body and the mind to reset and recharge. You can give yourself a mini savasana anytime you have a few minutes to devote to slowing down. Find a place to lie flat on your back. Place your arms at your sides just wide enough that your armpits can breathe, and separate your legs a little, letting your ankles flop open. Without straining to breathe particularly deeply, feel the rib cage expand and contract, the chest rise and fall. Count at least 10 breaths before slowly wiggling your fingers and toes. Bring your arms overhead into a good-morning-style stretch, as though you were just waking up from a deep sleep. Bend your knees and roll to one side before easing your way up to a sitting position.

—**EDWARD JONES,** wheelandaxle.net

PROJECT DECLUTTER

HOW YOU AND YOUR CREW CAN SUCCEED AT DECLUTTERING THE ENTIRE HOUSE—ONCE AND FOR ALL.

BY PETRA GUGLIELMETTI

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHNNY MILLER

THINK OF DECLUTTERING as the ur-resolution, the one move that makes all other goals more achievable. The whole-house, whole-family plan in these pages is designed to save time (fewer closet excavations) and aggravation (no more pantry landslides). It might also erase guilt, since clutter reminds us of the decisions, big and little, that we've dodged. More shelf space is lovely, but more mental space is the real game changer. What will you do with yours this year?

1

THE PREP

Confer with your team.

"It's essential to get everyone in on the process to ensure buy-in. Without collaboration, it's unlikely anyone will honor your unilateral decisions on where things live," says New York City–based professional organizer Andrew Mellen. Spark your family's interest by transforming a key shared space, like the mudroom. "Organizing is contagious—usually the less interested parties just need to see progress in one area to get on board," says Jordan Marks, cofounder and owner of It's Organized, with locations in New York City, New Jersey, and California. Ask everyone to share ideas on how your home could function better. Then divvy up jobs based on strengths: If your husband loves to wheel and deal, he can sell items on Facebook; your teenager can drive things to the recycling center; your 5-year-old can test the pens in the office.

Plan your attack.

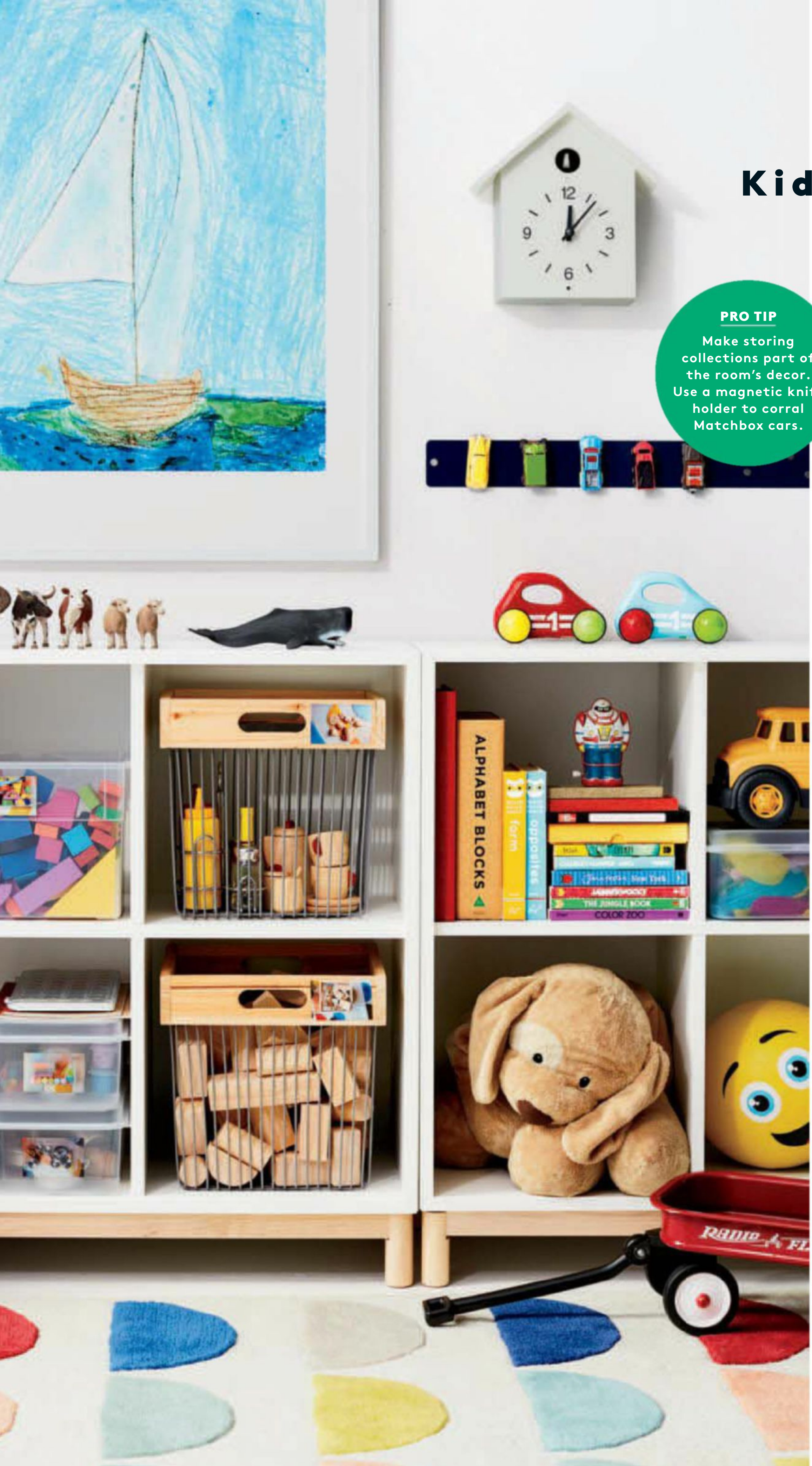
Ask your family which areas bother them most on a daily basis. They'll see the most meaningful result from tackling these pain points first. Reserve blocks of time to work—up to an hour a few times a week or a two-hour weekend stretch. Put them in the family calendar and stick to them; consistency is what matters most.

Take a "before" photo.

Look at it on your phone whenever you need motivation to tidy up. Or make a print—your family might think twice about dumping mail on the clean kitchen counter if there's a reminder of past messes hanging on the fridge.

Styling by Jeffrey Miller

Kids' Room



PRO TIP

Make storing collections part of the room's decor. Use a magnetic knife holder to corral Matchbox cars.

Decluttering Tips & Tricks

- **Set rules like at school:** Once you're done playing with something, return it to its rightful home.
- **Use clear bins** so kids can see what goes inside. Keep them small; bigger bins become dumping grounds.
- **Place a hamper in their closet** where they can toss clothes they've outgrown. When it fills up, make a trip to the donation center.

ORGANIZING ESSENTIAL

Instant Print

Give little ones a visual clue as to what goes where. Snap a photo and print a stick-on label for bins.

TO BUY: HP Sprocket 2-in-1, $160; store.hp.com.

TO BUY: Eket storage combination with legs, $130; ikea.com/us. Half Dot rug, $299 (4 by 6 ft.), and Wood and Wire gray cube bins, $29 each; landofnod.com. Sterilite large flip-top bins, $22 for 6; amazon.com. Our Tall Shoe Boxes, $4 each; containerstore.com. Magnetic Strip bulletin board, $13, and Mighties magnets, $8 for 8; threebythree.com. One World Denim Globe Pouf, $248; michelevarian.com.

2

THE PURGE

Get in a zone.

Set a timer each time you dive in—this will remind the group that you're on a schedule and will help keep a steady pace. "Shut off visual distractions—texts, TV—and put on music or a podcast you can zone out to," says Melissa Maker, author of *Clean My Space.*

Sort and edit.

Bring three sturdy bags into every room: one for trash, one for donations, and one for items that would be better stored elsewhere. Large, opaque garbage bags you can tie closed discourage peeking or rethinking. For bulky housewares and furniture, use bright dot stickers (the kind you see at garage sales) to mark the categories. First sweep up anything that's a no-brainer (worn-out shoes, obsolete sports equipment), then sort items, keeping like with like. In the entryway, group each person's belongings. In the closet, keep blouses together and pullovers in their own pile. As you work, identify what else you can get rid of. General rule: If you haven't used something in a year, it should go.

Move things out of sight.

As the bags get full, remove them from the space. Ask your teen to make a run to the dump and donation center or, if you're planning to host a garage sale, create a temporary "declutter zone," says Washington, D.C.–based organizing expert Rachel Rosenthal. Items that should live in other parts of the house can move there, too, but don't worry about giving them a perfect home just yet. Delegate the task or make finding space for them your next mini project.

Assign every item a home.

It's the cardinal rule of professional organizers: Every item needs one home. When the item is not in use, it's in that home. Think about storage options you already own that you can repurpose and have family members help come up with creative ways to store things. If you need to purchase storage containers, make a detailed list first to avoid overbuying. The last thing you want is to introduce new clutter.

Label, label, label.

This step is crucial in helping everyone remember exactly what goes where and maintain the new system, especially in heavy-use areas like the pantry, playroom, and mudroom. You can make temporary labels with a marker and bright tape or use a label maker for a longer-lasting ID.

OUR EXPERTS: **Sally Augustin,** PhD, environmental and design psychologist **Elspeth Bell,** PhD, psychologist specializing in clutter issues **Jacquie Denny,** cofounder of the online auction site Everything But The House (EBTH) **Molly Graves,** cofounder of The Neat Method **Isha Gupta,** MD, neurologist at IGEA Brain & Spine **Debra Johnson,** Merry Maids home cleaning expert **Ellen Madere,** professional organizer in Old Lyme, Connecticut **Melissa Maker,** author of *Clean My Space* **Jordan Marks,** cofounder and owner of It's Organized **Andrew Mellen,** professional organizer **Rachel Rosenthal,** organizing expert **Beth Penn,** author of *The Little Book of Tidying* and founder of Bneato Bar in Los Angeles **Gail Saltz,** clinical associate professor of psychiatry at the New York Presbyterian Hospital Weill-Cornell Medical College **Mimi Shagaga,** Beverly Hills–based clinical psychologist

CLUTTER HOT SPOT

Establish drop spots right at the door: a change jar, a sunglasses tray, key hooks, and an umbrella holder.

PRO TIP

Employ a large basket to corral in-and-out items, like store returns and sports equipment.

Entryway

Decluttering Tips & Tricks

- **Use a boot tray** to create boundaries for footwear. Whatever doesn't fit should go in a bedroom or closet.
- **Designate a hook, bin, or basket** for each member of the household. If their area gets full, they're responsible for returning items to their own closets (or a coat closet).
- **Off-season items** should be cleaned and stored out of the way; use a covered rolling rack in an attic or basement if you don't have a spare closet.

ORGANIZING ESSENTIAL

Extra Surface

No room for a console in your entry? Corral out-the-door items in this wall-mounted mesh basket.

TO BUY: Estique key hook and organizer, $15; umbra.com.

TO BUY: Yamazaki Home plain pole hanger, $70; ahalife.com. Yook key hook and organizer, $10; umbra.com. Hay Kaleido tray, $25 (small); momastore.org. Classic hamper, $128 (tall); thelittlemarket.com. Zinc boot tray with liner, $40; crateandbarrel.com. Yamazaki Home Slash umbrella stand, $50; ahalife.com.

BAGEL
DEFROST
REHEAT
CANCEL
MORAIOLO d'Umbria
OLIO D'OLIVA
ACE
SAL
5 0 55 50

CLUTTER HOT SPOT

Everyday-use appliances can live on the counter. Others should be stashed in a cabinet, pantry, or nearby closet.

PRO TIP

Keep cooking essentials handy on a tray near the stove. Whatever doesn't fit belongs in the pantry.

Kitchen

Decluttering Tips & Tricks

- **Think of central cabinets and drawers as prime real estate.** Only your most-used items should live in the quick-reach areas. The rest live higher up or farther back.
- **Use divided inserts** to separate categories within drawers. Apply museum gel to the base to hold them in place like built-ins.
- **In your junk drawer,** make use of multi-tiered inserts to compartmentalize the space and keep it from becoming a black hole.
- **Bring order to the refrigerator** by employing acrylic bins to corral awkwardly shaped packages on the shelves.
- **Allocate 15 minutes** each week to determine what stays and what gets recycled from the family command center.

ORGANIZING ESSENTIAL

Partitioned Tray
Prevent utensil pileup and make use of every inch of drawer space with an expandable divided insert.

TO BUY: Expandable bamboo utensil tray, $30; containerstore.com.

PRO TIP

Create a nonfridge spot for displaying art, homework, and schedules, like a magnetic board.

TO BUY: (This page) Everyday kitchen tool set (top right), $100 (15 pieces); oxo.com. SmorgasBoard, $75 for set; ilovehandles.com. Lattice stool, $398; michelevarian.com. (Opposite page) Hay pepper grinders, $35 each; momastore.org.

cozi

KEEP IT TOGETHER
Schedule family organizing sessions and maintain your to-do list with the Cozi Family Organizer app from Time Inc. (free for iOS and Android).

Experts debunk the top excuses for keeping clutter at **realsimple.com/excuses.**

TECH FIXES FOR CLUTTER

ArtKive
Photograph kids' artwork; share online or print books.

CampusQuilt.com
Turn your collection of old tees into a useful keepsake.

Fotobridge
Scan old photos in bulk and share or print books.

Genius Scan
Digitize papers so you can empty that overstuffed file cabinet.

Poshmark
Consign clothing items right from your phone–mall brands included.

Stuffstr
Keep a record of your things and get help determining where to direct unwanted items.

ThredUp
Send in batches of clothes for online consignment, without having to take photos.

Truxx
Find a local guy with a truck to help haul stuff to the dump.

Bathroom and Linen Closet

Blankets
Towels

Decluttering Tips & Tricks

- **Discard toiletries** you haven't used in a year (unopened ones can be donated to homeless and women's shelters). And don't hoard hotel minis if you never pack them when you travel.
- **Stash towels at eye level,** since you'll be reaching for them frequently. Hand towels and washcloths can be rolled and stowed in baskets to prevent toppling stacks.
- **Illuminate the contents** by installing stick-on, motion-activated lights.

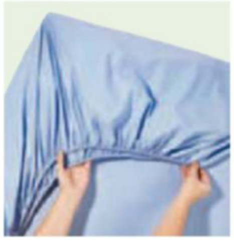
TO BUY: (Clockwise from top left) Dash throw in neon pink, $88; thelittlemarket.com. Brooklinen wool throw blanket, $229; brooklinen.com. Calvin Klein x Pendleton Peter wool saddle blanket, $285; calvinklein.us. Classic Core sheet set, from $99; brooklinen.com. Organic cotton towels, $50 for 3-piece set; grundamerica.com. Waffle bath towels, $49 each; parachutehome.com. No.10 Fabric Fresh, $16; thelaundress.com. Spectrum metal wire storage baskets, $13 each; bedbathandbeyond.com. Chandler woven collapsible storage, $22; potterybarnkids.com. Mr Beams wireless motion-sensing LED Stick Anywhere lights, $30 for 3; homedepot.com.

Sheets
Towels
Hand Towels
Bath Towels

PRO TIP

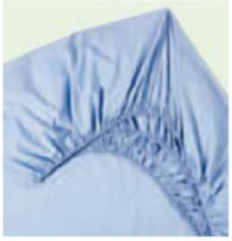
Package sheet sets within one of the matching pillowcases to keep everything together in a neat stack.

HOW TO FOLD A FITTED SHEET



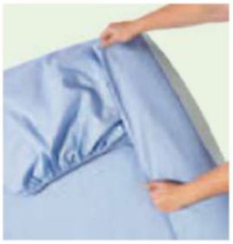
1

MAKE POCKETS
Hold the sheet in front of you with a hand in each top corner. Bring corners together and flip the right side over the left to create a pocket. Repeat on the bottom end.



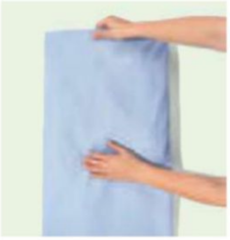
2

FOLD IN HALF
Place a hand in each pocket, then bring the points together and tuck the right side over the left to create one pocket.



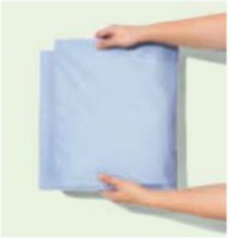
3

LAY ON A FLAT SURFACE
With the elastic edges facing up, fold the gathered part of the long edge over to make a straight edge.



4

FORM A RECTANGLE
Fold in half lengthwise to create a long rectangle.



5

FINISH
Fold the long rectangle into thirds, and you're done.

3

POST-CLEANSE

Reward yourself.

Plan a little treat after each work session and offer kids stars on a chart to earn a trip to the movies or the ice cream place. Layering in pleasure keeps the organizing process feeling uplifting and transformative, not like drawn-out drudgery. Just try not to reward yourself with a shopping spree (new clutter!).

Fight future clutter.

Take an "after" photo to capture what you'll strive to maintain. Adopt a hands-full mantra: "Never leave a room empty-handed, because chances are there's at least one item you could return to its rightful location," says Maker. When shopping, think about where new purchases will live and what you can get rid of to offset them. (That's the stickier cardinal rule of professional organizers: One in, one out.) Molly Graves, cofounder of the San Francisco–based The Neat Method, suggests blocking off an hour once a season for a "space lift," in which the family goes through each room, donation bag in hand.

ORGANIZING ESSENTIAL

High-Tech Label Maker
Design labels on your smartphone (emojis and all), then print them from this compact machine.
TO BUY: DYMO MobileLabeler, $140; officedepot.com.

PRO TIP

Style flat surfaces with a few objects you enjoy to discourage them from becoming landing strips for clutter.

Bedroom

Decluttering Tips & Tricks

- **Hang all clothes facing the same direction** and arrange like items together so you can easily see what you have (and need).
- **Use an acrylic letter file to stash** clutch purses upright on a closet shelf.
- **If you're consigning pieces online** and they haven't sold in three months, donate them. Keep them separate from your closet in the meantime.

CLUTTER HOT SPOT

Prevent discarded clothes from piling up on the bedroom chair. Place a basket next to it where those items should land (out of sight) until they can be sorted.

ORGANIZING ESSENTIALS

Laundry Helper
Use a folding board to create uniform shirt stacks and "file" them vertically between spring-loaded drawer dividers (above).
TO BUY: BoxLegend T-shirt clothes folder, $20; amazon.com.

Visual Cue
Color-code hangers in a shared closet to help differentiate family members' belongings.
TO BUY: Real Simple slimline flocked suit hangers in aqua, $20 for 40; bedbath andbeyond.com.

HOW TO DEAL WITH SENTIMENTAL CLUTTER

"More things fall into the 'sentimental' category than people are prepared for—we imbue all sorts of objects with meaning," says Gail Saltz, MD, clinical associate professor of psychiatry at the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital Weill Cornell Medical College in New York City. As you come across memorabilia you just can't get rid of, "set it aside as homework," suggests Beth Penn, a professional organizer in Los Angeles and the author of *The Little Book of Tidying*. Later, work with a family member or impartial friend to determine what's worth the real estate. Keep only those greeting cards with a meaningful note, not just a signature; choose one object from a group (your grandmother's china, for example) as a memento to display; or take photographs of a collection before donating it. As for kids' treasures, "it's developmentally appropriate for kids to hold on to objects as they learn to navigate their environment," says Elspeth Bell, PhD, a psychologist in Columbia, Maryland. Model organization yourself and make suggestions to help them learn to prioritize favorite things.

TO BUY: (This page) Bamboo deep drawer organizers, $30 for 2; containerstore.com. Silver rope hamper, $99; potterybarnkids.com. Calvin Klein x Pendleton Peter wool saddle blanket, $285; calvinklein.us. Billy lounge chair and ottoman; Liz O'Brien Antiques, 212.755.3800 for info. (Opposite page) Peek 6-drawer dresser, $1,999; bludot.com. Seagrass basket, $128 (short); serenaandlily.com. Custom rug, $599; abchome.com for similar. Vases; The End of History, 212.647.7598 for info.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: ICONS FROM NOUN PROJECT: LAFS, STUDIO FIBONACCI, CHRIS HOMAN, ICONATHON, JIVAN, THREE SIX FIVE, ROCKICON, MELLO

SHRIMP,
ESCAROLE
& FENNEL
SALAD

A GREEN WINTER

CAN SALAD BE COMFORT FOOD? THESE HEARTY BUT HEALTHY DISHES, FILLED WITH IN-SEASON PRODUCE, MAKE A STRONG CASE.

Recipes by Paige Grandjean
Photographs by Greg DuPree

STEAK & BEET SALAD

SHRIMP, ESCAROLE & FENNEL SALAD WITH OLIVE-HERB DRESSING

ACTIVE TIME **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

6 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
½ tsp. black pepper, divided
2 Tbsp. champagne vinegar or white vinegar
1 small shallot, finely chopped
¼ cup pitted Castelvetrano olives, coarsely chopped
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh chives
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
1 small head escarole (about 7 oz.), large leaves torn, small leaves left whole
1 head endive, leaves separated
1 medium fennel bulb, shaved (about 1½ cups), fronds reserved

HEAT 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add shrimp, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Cook shrimp, stirring occasionally, until opaque and cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl; set aside.

STIR together vinegar and shallot in a medium bowl; let stand 10 minutes. Add olives, chives, mustard, and remaining 5 tablespoons oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper; whisk to combine.

ARRANGE escarole, endive, shaved fennel, and shrimp on a serving platter. Spoon dressing over top and garnish with fennel fronds.

SEVEN-LAYER SALAD

STEAK & BEET SALAD

ACTIVE TIME **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR**
SERVES **4**

3	medium beets (about 1 lb.)
1	lb. hanger steak, trimmed
1¾	tsp. kosher salt, divided
¾	tsp. black pepper, divided
3½	Tbsp. olive oil, divided
1	small head radicchio, torn (about 3 cups)
1½	Tbsp. red wine vinegar
2	tsp. honey
2	tsp. fresh thyme leaves
1	cup whole-milk Greek yogurt
2	Tbsp. roasted and salted pepitas (shelled pumpkin seeds)

PREHEAT oven to 425°F. Place beets and 3 tablespoons water in a shallow baking dish. Cover tightly with foil and bake until beets are tender, 45 to 50 minutes. Uncover and let cool, then peel and cut into ½-inch wedges; set aside.

SEASON steak with 1 teaspoon salt and ⅜ teaspoon pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high. Cook steak 4 minutes per side for medium rare. Transfer to a cutting board; let rest 10 minutes before slicing.

COMBINE beets, radicchio, vinegar, honey, thyme, 2 tablespoons oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper in a large bowl; toss to coat. Stir together yogurt and remaining ½ tablespoon oil, ¼ teaspoon salt, and ⅛ teaspoon pepper. Spread yogurt mixture on a platter or each of 4 plates. Top with sliced steak, beet mixture, and pepitas.

SEVEN-LAYER SALAD

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **15 MINUTES**
SERVES **6**

½	cup sour cream
¼	cup whole buttermilk
2	Tbsp. fresh lime juice (from 1 large lime)
2	Tbsp. adobo sauce from canned chipotle peppers
2½	tsp. kosher salt, divided
2	tsp. ground cumin, divided
1	Tbsp. canola oil
1	small yellow onion (about 5 oz.), chopped (about 1 cup)
1	lb. 80/20 lean ground chuck
1½	tsp. ancho chile powder
1	15-oz. can pinto beans, drained and rinsed
2	medium tomatoes, chopped
1	romaine lettuce heart, chopped
4	oz. Cotija cheese, crumbled (about 1 cup)
1	large ripe avocado, sliced
1	cup tortilla strips or chips

WHISK together sour cream, buttermilk, lime juice, adobo sauce, and 1 teaspoon each salt and cumin; set aside.

HEAT oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add onion, beef, chile powder, and remaining 1½ teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon cumin; cook, stirring to break beef into pieces, until browned, about 6 minutes. Add beans; cook until heated through, about 3 minutes.

ARRANGE meat mixture, tomatoes, romaine, cheese, and avocado on a large platter. Drizzle with dressing and top with tortilla strips or chips.

CRISPY PORK & BOK CHOY LARB

GRAPEFRUIT
& FETA
FREGOLA SALAD

SHAVED BRUSSELS SPROUTS & KALE SALAD

CRISPY PORK & BOK CHOY LARB

ACTIVE TIME **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

3 Tbsp. fresh lime juice (from 2 limes)
1 Tbsp. fish sauce
2 tsp. light brown sugar
3 Tbsp. canola oil, divided
½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 red Fresno chile, thinly sliced (about ¼ cup), divided
1 lb. ground pork
1½ tsp. kosher salt
½ tsp. black pepper
6 heads baby bok choy (about 10 oz.)
4 large carrots, peeled and shaved lengthwise (about 2 cups)
2 scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal (about ⅓ cup)
⅓ cup packed fresh cilantro leaves and tender stems
¼ cup roasted salted peanuts, coarsely chopped

WHISK together lime juice, fish sauce, brown sugar, 1 tablespoon oil, and pepper flakes, if desired, in a small bowl until sugar dissolves; set aside.

HEAT remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add garlic and half the chile; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 10 seconds. Add pork, salt, and black pepper; cook, stirring to break pork into large pieces and pressing down firmly to crisp, until browned and starting to char, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in 2 tablespoons lime juice mixture.

THINLY slice bok choy stalks on the diagonal; coarsely chop leaves. Combine bok choy slices and leaves, carrots, scallions, and cilantro in a large bowl. Add remaining lime juice mixture; toss to coat. Serve pork over bok choy mixture. Top with peanuts and remaining chile.

GRAPEFRUIT & FETA FREGOLA SALAD

ACTIVE TIME **30 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

8 oz. fregola or Israeli couscous (about 1¼ cups)
1 small red onion, thinly sliced (about 1 cup), divided
4½ Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1¾ tsp. kosher salt, divided
2 red grapefruit
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
1 tsp. honey
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
½ tsp. black pepper
3 Tbsp. chopped fresh dill, divided
2½ oz. feta cheese, crumbled (about ⅔ cup)
⅓ cup toasted hazelnuts, chopped

COOK fregola or couscous in salted water according to package directions. Drain, rinse, and place in a large bowl; set aside to cool.

MEANWHILE, preheat broiler to high with oven rack 6 inches from heat. Toss half the onion with ½ tablespoon oil and ¼ teaspoon salt on a baking sheet. Broil until lightly charred, 3 to 4 minutes; set aside.

SECTION grapefruit over a medium bowl to catch juices.

WHISK together lemon juice, honey, mustard, pepper, 3 tablespoons grapefruit juice, 1 tablespoon dill, and remaining 4 tablespoons oil and 1½ teaspoons salt in a large bowl. Add fregola, charred and raw sliced red onion, feta, hazelnuts, and grapefruit segments; gently toss to coat. Garnish with remaining 2 tablespoons dill.

Hungry for more? Find our best vegetarian salads at realsimple.com/vegsalads.

SHAVED BRUSSELS SPROUTS & KALE SALAD WITH CREAMY TAHINI DRESSING

ACTIVE TIME **30 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES**
SERVES **4**

1½ cups torn crusty bread (about 4 oz.)
8 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
¾ tsp. black pepper, divided
3 small lemons
1 bunch lacinato kale (about 8 oz.), torn (about 5 cups)
12 oz. Brussels sprouts, shaved (about 4 cups)
1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts
2 Tbsp. white miso
2 Tbsp. well-stirred tahini
2 tsp. honey

PREHEAT oven to 400°F. Toss bread with 2 tablespoons oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper on a baking sheet. Bake until lightly toasted, about 8 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside.

JUICE 1 to 1½ of the lemons to yield 3 tablespoons juice. Combine kale, 2 tablespoons oil, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and ½ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Using your hands, massage kale to slightly soften, about 2 minutes. Add Brussels sprouts; toss to coat and set aside.

SEASON chicken with remaining 1 teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Cut remaining lemons into ¼-inch slices; remove seeds. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add lemon slices; cook until golden, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Remove from skillet. Add chicken and 1 tablespoon oil to skillet; cook until golden and cooked through, 7 to 8 minutes per side. Transfer to a cutting board; let rest 5 minutes before slicing.

WHISK together miso, tahini, honey, and remaining 2 tablespoons lemon juice and 1 tablespoon oil. Add dressing to kale mixture; toss to coat. Top salad with lemon slices, chicken, and croutons.

FOOD STYLING BY CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN. OPENING SPREAD, PAGE RIGHT, FABRIC BY MINTED;
PLATES BY MUD CERAMICS; FABRICS BY REBECCA ATWOOD

SLEEK HAIR

Wish you had a third arm to help tame your mane? Flip for the frizz-ending fix.

ONE-STEP BEAUTY FIXES

You don't have to overhaul your whole routine to make a **BIG IMPACT**. These tiny tweaks will step up your look and **STREAMLINE** your mornings for good.

FRESH EYES

Put down the concealer and try a better method for brighter eyes.

By **JOLENE EDGAR**
Photographs by **MEI TAO**

In pretty much every area of life, judicious tweaks can be transformative. Whether you're fine-tuning a martini with the briniest olives or upgrading a sofa in drapey cashmere, the impact is undeniable. The same simple-but-sensational approach applies to beauty regimens, too—only better: Not only can the right beauty boost refresh your appearance, it can make your morning hustle less grueling, by freeing you from the confines of concealer, flatirons, and more. So what are you waiting for? Liberation lies right this way.

END YOUR FIGHT WITH FRIZZ

Frizz: the other F-word. It eats up precious prep time—all that washing, round-brushing, flatironing—and then sabotages your style the second you step outside or onto the treadmill. You can't exactly hit a blowout bar every single morning, so try this.

PRO FIX: The Cezanne Perfect Finish Keratin Smoothing Treatment ($350 and up) is "known to change morning routines significantly," says Dana Tizzio, a senior stylist at Butterfly Studio Salon in New York City. "Air-drying is totally possible with the right leave-in, and when you do blow-dry, you only need your hands to smooth." The formula is formaldehyde-free, acquiring its power from a natural silk protein, which envelopes strands, sealing hair's outermost cuticle layer. The two-hour salon treatment can reduce frizz and loosen curls by up to 80 percent, according to New York City salon owner Nunzio Saviano, and can easily be customized for those wanting to retain ringlets while still depoufing. Results last about three months—longer if you don't wash every day. Not only is the process safe for color-treated hair, but clients may actually notice hair getting healthier, courtesy of the hot-tools hiatus.

DIY SOLUTION: The right frizz-fighting serum—one that boosts moisture and definition—can make styling less of a battle. For fine textures, try Kérastase Discipline Spray Fluidissime ($42; kerastase-usa.com). If you have skinny strands but lots of them, go for Oribe Supershine Light Moisturizing Cream ($52; oribe.com). And for thicker hair, try Leonor Greyl Éclat Naturel Styling Cream ($46; nordstrom.com).

SOFTEN EYE CRINKLES

Radiating like sunbeams from the eyes' outer corners, these crinkles form from repetitive muscle movement—with every smile or squint, the skin scrunches, etching in lines—coupled with a weakening of collagen proteins with age. On these creases, cover-up is the cosmetic equivalent of neon highlighter.

PRO FIX: If these creases bother you, a small dose of neuromodulator, like Botox or Dysport, can "relax muscles just enough to prevent skin from folding," says Joshua Zeichner, MD, director of cosmetic and clinical research in dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. (Shots start around $500 and last three months.) By addressing eye crinkles at the first sign of lines, not before, "we can usually get rid of them with Botox," he adds.

DIY SOLUTION: Beyond ample sunscreen and oversize sunnies, "a vitamin A–based retinoid cream can help by gradually thickening the skin to fill in lines," says Zeichner. To ensure its potency is tailored to this sensitive area, choose a hydrating eye-specific formula, such as Ever Sublime Retinol Eye Wrinkle Smoother ($74; everskin.com).

EVEN OUT SPECKLED SKIN

Freckle pride is officially a thing—and we're all for it. It's sunspots we could do without. Bigger, darker, and blurrier than pinpoint freckles, these unrelenting brown spots have a decidedly less youthful vibe.

PRO FIX: An in-office procedure can zap widespread sun damage, leaving skin only slightly red for a few hours. Consider no-downtime lasers (such as the Clear + Brilliant), which attack brown spots and are generally safe for all skin tones, or intense pulsed light devices, which can tackle both brown splotches and red spots (caused by broken capillaries) but are safe only for light complexions. For both, you'll need two to four sessions, at roughly $500 a pop. Dermatologists typically follow Clear + Brilliant with a vitamin C serum, like SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic ($165; skinceuticals.com), to fast-track radiance, as the laser "creates microscopic channels in the skin that allow for greater penetration of vitamin C, the spot-fading antioxidant," says Zeichner.

DIY SOLUTION: To score an even complexion at home, pick up AHA peel pads. Shereene Idriss, MD, associate clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, likes Cane + Austin Retexture Pads + 10% Glycolic Acid ($60; sephora.com) and a brightening serum. Try Clinique Fresh Pressed Daily Booster with Pure Vitamin C 10% ($20; clinique.com).

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY TROI OLLIVIERRE BEAUTY

EVEN SKIN

Instead of spackling
on foundation daily,
try the latest and
greatest brighteners.

LUSH BROWS

Do you spend a solid five minutes penciling in your arches? There's a faster way.

MINIMIZE DARK CIRCLES

They've faced the best concealers. Yet there they are. When it comes to zombielike circles, Idriss says, "genetics plays a huge role." With age and sun exposure, fat and collagen in the area dwindle, causing hollows to deepen.

PRO FIX: Your derm can brighten and smooth your undereyes for a year or more using a delicate layer of hyaluronic acid (HA) filler—one of the more dilute formulas, like Juvederm Volbella or Belotero ($800 and up). The process works by lifting skin up and away from bluish blood vessels and gently swelling the sunken area. But they should be used sparingly, to undetectable effect, so the undereye maintains some of its naturally concave appearance. To that end, dermatologists will often inject along the tops of the cheeks first, as "often, if you lift the cheeks just a bit, the undereyes will correct on their own," says Zeichner.

DIY SOLUTION: Tap on an HA-infused eye gel, like Dr. Dennis Gross Hyaluronic Marine Dew It All ($48; sephora.com), which can help plump up hollows, temporarily diminishing darkness.

FAKE FULLER BROWS

Raise your hand if you survived the '90s. Now raise your hand if your eyebrows did. But it's 2017—there's a better way to beef up anemic arches than pencil strokes and pomade.

PRO FIX: Microfeathering. It's a more authentic-looking take on microblading (in which semi-permanent pigment is deposited into the skin with a blade), pioneered by eyebrow expert Kristie Streicher, who tends to such A-listers as Mandy Moore at Striiike, the Beverly Hills beauty studio she co-owns with her sisters. "My goal is to fill in only sparse areas of the brow with strokes that exactly mimic the natural hair and its growth pattern for a soft, natural effect," she explains. While microbladed brows tend to look solid and tattoo-like, microfeathered arches resemble fluffier, more youthful versions of your own. "You shouldn't be able to differentiate between the microfeather strokes and your real eyebrow hairs," says Streicher. The two-appointment process ($1,000) begins with a test session, during which Streicher conceals a few flicks of color into brows to see how your skin responds. (Mild swelling, bruising, and discomfort are common.) Six weeks later, clients return for additional ink and final tweaks. Since pigment slowly fades, touch-ups are needed every six months, but in between, upkeep is super minimal—as in, clear brow gel only.

DIY SOLUTION: Brow-enhancing serums, like RevitaBrow Advanced ($110; revitalsh.com) and GrandeBrow ($80; sephora.com), aim to restore arches with prostaglandin analogs, which are "hormonelike lipids that act as chemical messengers, signaling follicles to rev up hair growth," says cosmetic chemist Kelly Dobos. Added conditioners, circulation boosters, and peptides help promote lushness by nourishing follicles and strengthening hairs.

For the essential beauty products everyone needs, go to realsimple.com/beautyforall.

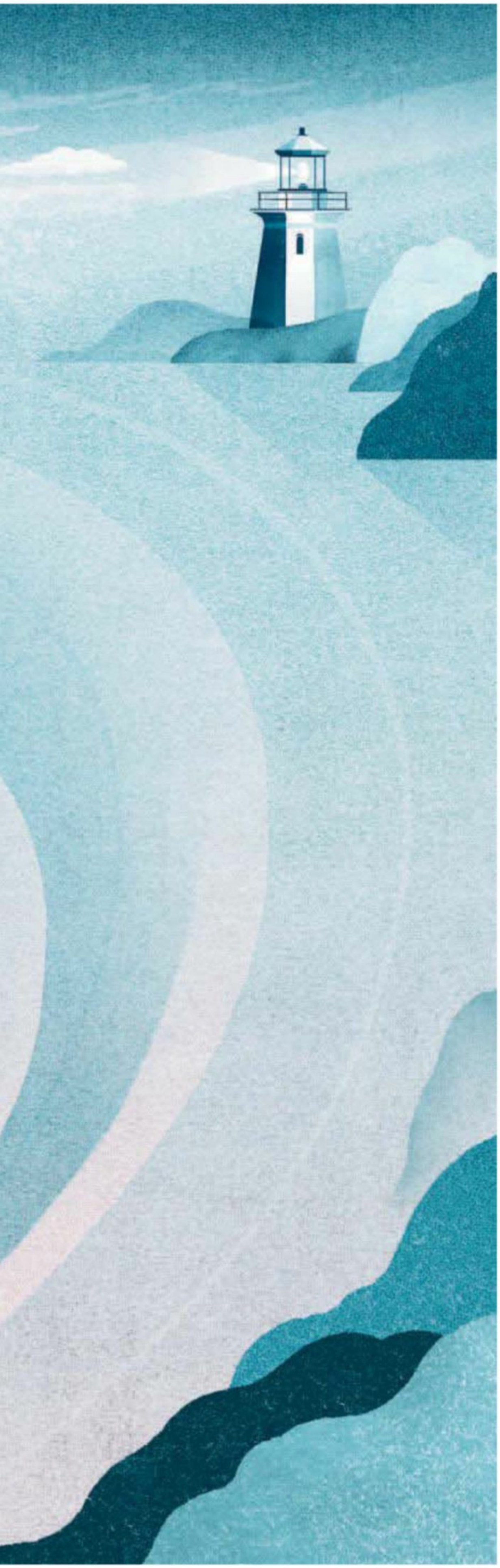
GET RID OF FUZZ

What's worse than constant plucking or razoring? The irritation left behind. Consider upgrading your method.

PRO FIX: Modern hair-removal lasers are less painful and quicker than waxing. They take aim at pigment, delivering a blast of heat to "disable the reproductive cycle of the hair within the follicle," says Christian Karavolas, a certified laser specialist and owner of Romeo & Juliette Laser Hair Removal in New York City. Thanks to built-in skin-cooling mechanisms, he says, the discomfort is about half that of waxing, and the upper lip or chin can be tackled in under five minutes. (Plus, no ingrowns!) In well-trained hands, these lasers are safe for all skin tones, but they work best on darker hair. Women can expect a 45 to 85 percent permanent hair reduction on the face, he adds—results vary based on age, hormones, and medical history. Figure 6 to 10 monthly visits (starting at about $75 each), plus one or two touch-ups each year.

DIY SOLUTION: The Flawless Finishing Touch ($20; amazon.com) has a spinning head that disappears hairs in seconds without yanking or redness. Beyond the usual uses (later, mustache!), it makes for seamless foundation application by defuzzing a full face in a few seconds.

FASHION IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE: RACHEL RACHEL ROY TOP, $79; RACHELROY.COM. FOREVER21 TOP, $23; FOREVER21.COM. MICHELLE CAMPBELL EARRINGS, $65; CAMPBELLCOLLECTIONS.COM. BROOKS BROTHERS TOP, $98; BROOKSBROTHERS.COM. THE9THMUSE NECKLACE, $118; THE9THMUSE.COM. J.CREW TOP, $88; JCREW.COM. MAYA BRENNER EARRINGS, $250; MAYABRENNER.COM.



How to Make a Big Change

(When You Aren’t Sure What You Want)

Feeling stuck—in your career, in your life, or in general—and don’t know how to move forward? Meet the Lighthouse Method.

By Stacy Kim

Illustrations by Gracia Lam

VALERIE HAD WORKED her entire life to become a scientist. She had survived a whittling-down process and was on a path she thought she wanted. Yet as she approached securing tenure as a college professor in New York City, she didn’t feel satisfied.

One day it struck her that her colleagues actually enjoyed parts of their job that she didn’t care for. “I didn’t want to be spending all my time and energy presenting or making a name for myself through publishing and politicking,” she said. “It was exhausting keeping up a facade pretending to want this career.”

As a life coach, I help talented and caring women successfully juggle careers, families, and relationships. I’ve met a surprising number of women like Valerie (I’ve omitted her last name to respect her privacy). They have successful careers and are active in their communities.

But below the surface, something is missing. They struggle to uncover what could give them fulfillment. Some get frustrated that they can't figure out what they want on their own. Others feel guilty. By the time they meet me, many need tissues during our first session.

When I opened my practice, I didn't know how to help these women. The usual weapons in a coach's arsenal—creating a vision, making a plan, setting goals, and staying accountable—didn't apply. After all, how can you set goals for an unknown objective?

I was stumped.

It was unbearable to see such bright, thoughtful women feel torn up. So I stalled by persuading those early clients to take a short break from trying to figure out an end goal and instead do something pleasurable. We stumbled upon a strategy that not only worked to cheer them up but also helped them find meaning and purpose. Distilling their steps into an analogy, I discovered what I call the Lighthouse Method. If you want to make a life change but have no idea what it should be, think of that change as a lighthouse far away. You know neither what the lighthouse looks like nor its location. You can only see its dim, distant light. To reach it, you need to step offshore, point your boat in the direction of the light, and row.

Described this way, the Lighthouse Method seems logical, but it's not the approach most of us take. We default to planning before doing. If you want to get good grades, lose weight, or find a new job, you set a goal and plan of attack. But if you don't know what you want to achieve, making a plan is like driving to an unknown destination. Talented women with perfectionist tendencies especially will search for the perfect plan before taking action, in order to avoid missteps. And this is why so many get stuck. If you feel unsatisfied but can't quite pinpoint what you want—in your career, your home life, or your free time—use these steps to draw the map to your own lighthouse.

TAKE THE SCENIC ROUTE

TO START THE LIGHTHOUSE METHOD, you need to get in your boat and pick a direction. The best way to begin is to do something purely enjoyable. Many busy women, like Valerie, find this challenging. "Though I had wanted to sew myself a skirt for a while and even purchased the pattern and fabric, it felt incredibly indulgent, wildly wrong, and frivolous," she said of her first activity. "But after a half hour, I found myself in a mental state of just doing. I lost track of time. I loved it."

Most of us tightly bind our identities to our career, unknowingly deemphasizing other aspects of our lives. We bifurcate the spheres of "work" and "leisure," believing that work can't be amusing and leisure can't be arduous. Yet doing pleasurable things is critical. It not only makes you happier but helps you identify what gives you "flow," a term coined by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, professor of psychology and management at Claremont Graduate University, to describe the revitalizing sensation you get as you become completely absorbed in a task.

Once you add gratifying activities into your life, you can't help seeking out more while abandoning those that don't satiate. When Valerie finished her skirt, she felt emboldened to start other career explorations. "Making something is taking a creative risk," she said. "It feels fantastic. [I got] into the mode of, 'OK, I'm going to take another risk today.'"

Valerie began to network, catching up with friends who used their advanced degrees outside academia. They introduced her to new people, and her newfound enthusiasm made meeting strangers less intimidating—even exciting. Sewing helped Valerie see she yearned for more creative and entrepreneurial work. Eight months later, she launched an online education business, Be Naturally Curious, which makes it fun for parents and educators to teach kids science. To this day, she turns to sewing whenever she feels stuck.

TRY THIS: Find what gives you flow. Rekindle an old hobby or give a current one a few more hours or challenges. For some, it might be cooking. For others, it's exercise. Make sure it's something you want to do. Then aim to expand your repertoire by making note of when you are doing anything else that makes you feel strong and energized.

REDIRECT WHEN YOU NEED TO

ONCE YOU'VE PUSHED OFFSHORE and begun to explore what gives you satisfaction, you'll inevitably run into obstacles. Usually these stem from doubts you might have about the direction you're taking. After all, when there's only a glimmer of light from an unknown lighthouse ahead, rowing can feel dark and scary.

Another client, Renata Carvalho, had long lost interest in marketing but was feeling too scared to make a change. "My work defined me," she said. "If I'm not the executive, the advertising woman, I had always been, then who am I?"

When her husband decided to move his business from Buenos Aires to New York, Brazil-born Renata saw it as "the perfect excuse" to start over. Asked at the time what was the most recent pleasurable thing she had done, she said it was reviewing the floor plans for her new home. Thinking she might enjoy visiting apartments for a living, she talked to her real estate agent. She soon realized what attracted her instead was architecture. But the architect she interviewed discouraged her, describing the long, expensive training required. Determined to avoid returning to marketing, Renata remained optimistic and kept searching. She discovered interior design and found a manageable associate's degree program.

Optimism is a powerful motivator, according to Adam Grant, professor of psychology and management at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and author of *Originals: How Non-Conformists Move the World.* But so is what he calls "defensive pessimism." By envisioning and confronting worst-case scenarios, you can propel yourself to prepare. That's what Renata did when she learned she needed to pass the TOEFL exam (a test of one's mastery of English as a foreign language) for her program. She began to question whether she could return to school at all, so to avoid failure, she enrolled in a test-prep class. She not only realized she could study again but passed her exam.

> **Moving a stopped boat requires will and energy. It's easier to keep moving by rowing small, consistent strokes.**

Months before she even graduated, Renata got two clients. "It's just incredible," she said. "I can't stop laughing."

TRY THIS: Until you've figured out what you want to do, trust you'll succeed. Write down some positive affirmations. Talk to friends and family who encourage you. And keep up with activities that give you pleasure and flow. The moment you sense hesitation, tell your inner critic, "I haven't decided yet. I'll be cautious once I do." If you find yourself ruminating, seek a distraction, like dancing or doing a puzzle.

KEEP MOMENTUM WITH SMALL STROKES

PEOPLE ASSUME THAT TACKLING big questions, like "What should I do with my life?" or "What will make me happy?," require big chunks of time. Some wait until they can clear the decks, while others won't bother. Either way, you stall. Moving a stopped boat requires will and energy. It's easier to keep moving by rowing small, frequent, and consistent strokes.

When Nicole Villamora moved to Washington, D.C., for a job with a lobbying firm, she soon realized it wasn't right for her and felt isolated. "I underestimated the challenges of starting over in a new city," she said. "I was alone for the first time in my adult life." To turn things around, Nicole started listening to uplifting podcasts. Always interested in health, she did something nourishing every day—yoga, a positive mind-set practice, or cooking a nutritious meal.

Don't underestimate the power of these tiny actions. Small wins not only make one's day but can be a huge motivator, according to the coauthors of *The Progress Principle*, Teresa M. Amabile, professor of business administration and director of research at Harvard Business School, and Steven Kramer, a developmental psychologist. Building on each victory, Nicole continued exploring health-related activities, leading her to meet new people and try new things. "I finally felt empowered and hopeful," she said. Soon a tech start-up founder she met hired her as a company health coach.

TRY THIS: Create some small wins by breaking down projects into short behaviors. For example, if you want to get healthy, don't start with a strict exercise program. Walk around the block, do some jumping jacks, or climb a flight of stairs. If you want a new job, the first move is not to overhaul your résumé. Invite someone in a field that interests you to coffee. To keep a task small, set a timer for, say, 20 minutes. When time is up, congratulate yourself.

For many women, these steps will seem counterintuitive. But if you don't know what you want, lose the map, enjoy the scenery, adjust your sails, let go of anchors, and gently row. You'll find your lighthouse is closer than you thought.

Stacy Kim is a social scientist turned life coach at Life Junctions (lifejunctions.com).

ADVERTISEMENT

RISE AND (REALLY) SHINE.

REAL SLEEP™
by REAL SIMPLE™

15% OFF
WITH CODE
SLEEP15
VALID 1/1/18–2/1/18

Getting the zzzs you need to wake up refreshed is now easier with REAL SLEEP™ by Real Simple. Our new memory foam mattress provides lasting temperature control to keep you cool all night.

ORDER NOW AND SLEEP EASY WITH A FREE 100 NIGHTS TRIAL.

LEARN MORE AT REALSLEEP.COM

100-NIGHT FREE TRIAL

FAST SHIPPING

FREE SHIPPING & FREE RETURNS

10!
10-YEAR WARRANTY

$
MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

EARTH-FRIENDLY

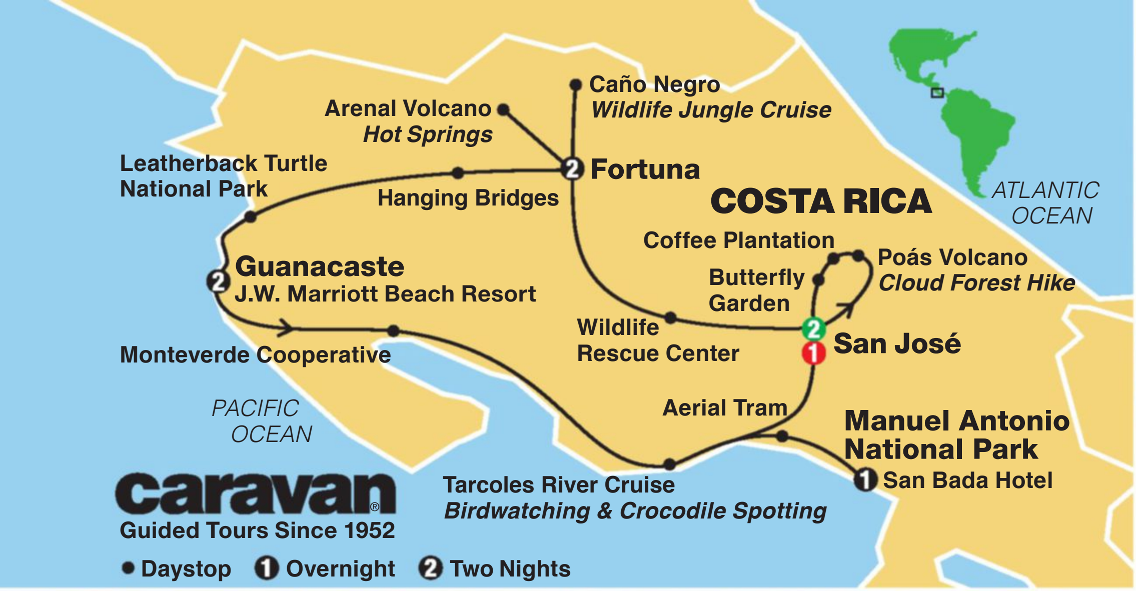
food

JANUARY

It's the most introverted month, when we sweep up the confetti and turn our focus inward. Give yourself the gift of time, with road-tested store-bought soups that could fool even your nana (page 126). Or enjoy the gift of family, with easy weeknight dinners like open-faced veggie sandwiches starring in-season fennel (page 121). And when all else fails? You definitely deserve one of our kitchen sink cookies (page 127), a big-batch gift that keeps on giving all month long.

OFFSET

Photograph by Tucker & Hossler


Caño Negro
Wildlife Jungle Cruise
Arenal Volcano
Hot Springs
Leatherback Turtle
National Park
2 Fortuna
Hanging Bridges
COSTA RICA
ATLANTIC
OCEAN
Coffee Plantation
2 Guanacaste
J.W. Marriott Beach Resort
Butterfly
Garden
Poás Volcano
Cloud Forest Hike
Wildlife
Rescue Center
2 1 San José
Monteverde Cooperative
PACIFIC
OCEAN
Aerial Tram
Manuel Antonio
National Park
1 San Bada Hotel
caravan
Guided Tours Since 1952
Tarcoles River Cruise
Birdwatching & Crocodile Spotting
● Daystop 1 Overnight 2 Two Nights

Manuel Antonio National Park

Scarlet Macaw

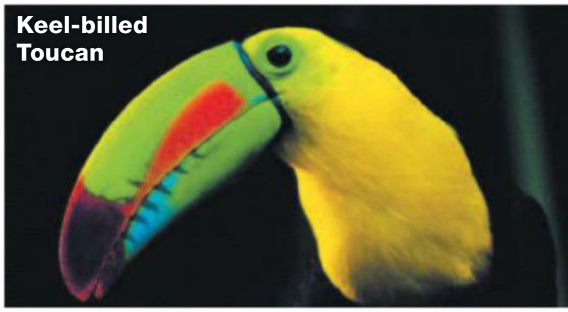
Rainforest Hike

Wildlife Watching

Capuchin Monkey

Morpho Butterfly

Three-toed Sloth


Keel-billed Toucan

Visit Costa Rica on a Fully Guided Caravan Tour; Call Now for Choice Dates, FREE Brochure: (800) CARAVAN, Caravan.com

Costa Rica Natural Paradise 9-Day Tour $1295

Volcanoes, Beaches & Rainforests—w/ All Hotels, Meals & Activities

Your Costa Rica tour is fully guided from start to finish—and all-inclusive—with all hotels, all meals, and all activities.

Join the smart shoppers & experienced travelers who rely on Caravan.

Your Costa Rica Tour Itinerary

Day 1. Your tour starts in San José, Costa Rica.

Day 2. Explore Poás Volcano and view inside the active crater.

Day 3. Visit to a wildlife rescue center.

Day 4. Cruise on the Rio Frio river into Caño Negro. Then, enjoy a relaxing soak in the volcanic hot springs.

Day 5. Hike on the Hanging Bridges. Continue on to Costa Rica's Pacific Coast.

Day 6. Free time at your beach resort.

Day 7. Cruise on the Tarcoles River. Enjoy bird watching and crocodile spotting. Continue to your Manuel Antonio hotel, located at the National Park entrance.

Day 8. Explore Manuel Antonio National Park. Hike through the rainforest and along spectacular beach coves. Enjoy a thrilling aerial tram adventure.

Day 9. Return with wonderful memories. ¡Hasta la vista!—Caravan

---

Detailed Itinerary at Caravan.com

Choose Your Guided Tour plus tax & fees

Guatemala with Tikal	10 days	$1395
Costa Rica	9 days	$1295
Panama Canal Tour	8 days	$1295
Nova Scotia, P.E.I.	10 days	$1395
Canadian Rockies	9 days	$1695
Grand Canyon	8 days	$1495
California Coast, Yosemite	8 days	$1595
Mount Rushmore	8 days	$1395
New England, Fall Colors	8 days	$1395

---

*"**All hotels were excellent!** There is no way I would've stayed in such superior and sophisticated hotels for the price I paid"*
—Client, Salinas, CA

"Brilliant, Affordable Pricing"
—Arthur Frommer, Travel Editor

The #1 In Value—FREE Brochure: (800) CARAVAN, Caravan.com

caravan

Fully Guided Tours Since 1952

Easy Dinner 1

Slow-cooker short ribs with rosemary potatoes

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **5 HOURS, 15 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓Freezable ✓Make Ahead ✓Slow Cooker ✓One Pot ✓Gluten-Free ✓Family Friendly

½	cup low-sodium beef broth
3	Tbsp. tomato paste
1	Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley stems (about 10 stems), plus leaves for garnish
2	Tbsp. plus 1¼ tsp. kosher salt, divided
1	tsp. black pepper, plus more for serving
2	lb. bone-in beef short ribs
1	12-oz. pkg. frozen pearl onions
3	medium carrots, chopped
4	cloves garlic, smashed and peeled, divided
1½	lb. baby Yukon Gold potatoes
2	rosemary sprigs

STIR together broth, tomato paste, parsley stems, 1 teaspoon salt, and pepper in a 6-quart slow cooker. Add short ribs, onions, carrots, and 2 cloves garlic; nest ribs into vegetables. Cover and cook on high until meat is very tender, 5 to 6 hours. Reduce to warm and remove lid.

MEANWHILE, place potatoes, rosemary, remaining 2 cloves garlic, and 2 tablespoons salt in a stockpot; add water to cover. Bring to a boil over high. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until potatoes are very tender, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat. Remove rosemary and garlic, then drain.

RESERVING cooking liquid, remove short ribs and vegetables from slow cooker. Skim fat from liquid, then transfer to a blender; add remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. With center piece of blender lid removed, secure lid on blender. Place a clean dish towel over lid opening. Puree on medium-high until smooth.

SERVE potatoes and short ribs with vegetables and sauce. Garnish with parsley leaves and pepper.

PER SERVING: 373 CALORIES, 11G FAT (5G SAT.), 54MG CHOL., 7G FIBER, 23G PRO., 45G CARB., 1,261MG SOD., 8G SUGAR

FOOD STYLING BY CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN

Recipes by Emily Nabors Hall Photographs by Greg DuPree

Easy Dinner 2

Chicken piccata with mushrooms and Brussels sprouts

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓ Quick Cooking ✓ Healthy Pick ✓ Make Ahead

8 oz. uncooked orzo
4 5-oz. chicken breast cutlets
1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
1 tsp. black pepper, divided
4 Tbsp. unsalted butter, divided
8 oz. fresh cremini mushrooms, sliced
8 oz. fresh Brussels sprouts, quartered
1 cup unsalted chicken stock
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
1 Tbsp. capers, drained and rinsed
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh oregano

COOK orzo according to package directions.

MEANWHILE, season chicken with ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon butter in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Add chicken and cook until golden and cooked through, about 4 minutes per side. Reserving drippings in skillet, transfer chicken to a plate and loosely cover with foil.

RETURN skillet to medium-high; add remaining 3 tablespoons butter and stir until melted. Add mushrooms and Brussels sprouts; cook, without stirring, until tender, about 5 minutes. Add stock, lemon juice, capers, and remaining ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper; bring to a simmer and cook 1 minute.

SERVE chicken sliced, over orzo and vegetables. Spoon sauce over the top and garnish with oregano.

PER SERVING: 530 CALORIES, 16G FAT (8G SAT.), 134MG CHOL., 5G FIBER, 44G PRO., 51G CARB., 646MG SOD., 4G SUGAR

Easy Dinner 3

Soba with charred scallions and soft-cooked eggs

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **30 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓ Quick Cooking ✓ Healthy Pick ✓ Vegetarian

6	cups (48 oz.) low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
¼	cup low-sodium soy sauce
2	Tbsp. rice vinegar
1	1½-in. piece fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
1	red bell pepper, thinly sliced
1	small serrano or jalapeño chile, thinly sliced
2	bunches scallions, cut into 2-in. lengths
4	large eggs
4	oz. soba noodles
¼	cup fresh cilantro leaves
½	red Fresno chile, thinly sliced crosswise

BRING broth, soy sauce, vinegar, ginger, bell pepper, and serrano chile to a boil in a large saucepan over high. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until fragrant, about 10 minutes.

MEANWHILE, preheat broiler to high with oven rack 5 inches from heat. Place scallions in a single layer on a foil-lined baking sheet; broil until charred, 3 to 5 minutes. Let cool.

GENTLY lower eggs into simmering broth mixture and cook 10 minutes. Reserving broth, use a slotted spoon to transfer eggs to a bowl of ice water. Remove broth from heat and cover to keep warm. Let eggs cool 5 minutes, then peel and cut in half.

MEANWHILE, return broth mixture to a simmer; add scallions and noodles. Cook, stirring occasionally, until noodles are tender, about 4 minutes. Divide soup among 4 bowls. Top with eggs, cilantro, and Fresno chile.

PER SERVING: 228 CALORIES, 5G FAT (0G SAT.), 186MG CHOL., 3G FIBER, 14G PRO., 31G CARB., 1,269MG SOD., 5G SUGAR

Easy Dinner 4

Smoked trout salad with creamy dill dressing

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES** TOTAL TIME **45 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓ Healthy Pick

2 medium golden or red beets, peeled and halved
1 oz. French bread, torn into small pieces (about 1 cup)
1½ tsp. grated lemon zest
2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
1 tsp. black pepper, divided
½ cup sour cream
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh dill, plus more for garnish
1 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1 Tbsp. prepared horseradish
5 oz. mixed baby greens
8 oz. smoked trout, broken into small pieces

PREHEAT oven to 450°F.

WRAP beet halves in a double layer of aluminum foil and roast on a baking sheet until tender, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from foil and let stand until cool enough to handle, then cut into wedges.

MEANWHILE, toss together bread, lemon zest, 1 tablespoon oil, and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper on a rimmed baking sheet; spread in a single layer. Bake until lightly golden, about 5 minutes. Remove from oven; set aside.

WHISK together sour cream, dill, 2 tablespoons water, vinegar, horseradish, and remaining 1 tablespoon oil and ¾ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a small bowl. Arrange greens, trout, and sliced beets on a large platter. Drizzle with ½ cup dressing. Garnish with additional chopped dill and serve with remaining dressing.

PER SERVING: 255 CALORIES, 16G FAT (4G SAT.), 95MG CHOL., 2G FIBER, 19G PRO., 11G CARB., 618MG SOD., 4G SUGAR

Easy Dinner 5

Open-faced roasted veggie sandwiches

ACTIVE TIME **25 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **25 MINUTES** SERVES **4**

✓Quick Cooking ✓Healthy Pick
✓Vegetarian ✓Family Friendly

Nonstick cooking spray
2 large carrots, thinly sliced
1 small fennel bulb, thinly sliced, fronds reserved for garnish
1 large red bell pepper, thinly sliced
1 small head cauliflower, florets thinly sliced
7 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
¾ tsp. black pepper, divided
4 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
1 French bread loaf, cut in half lengthwise
8 slices provolone cheese (6½ oz.)
5 oz. baby arugula

PREHEAT broiler to high with oven rack 4 inches from heat.

LIGHTLY coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray. Arrange carrots, fennel, bell pepper, and cauliflower in a single layer on baking sheet; drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil. Season with ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Broil, stirring once halfway through, until lightly charred, 8 to 10 minutes.

MEANWHILE, whisk together vinegar and remaining 6 tablespoons oil, ¾ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper in a small bowl; set aside.

REMOVE vegetables from oven; set aside. Scoop out some crumb from bread halves to create 2 shells. Place shells on a clean rimmed baking sheet; broil until golden, about 1 minute.

DRIZZLE 2 tablespoons dressing over toasted bread shells. Top with roasted vegetables, then drizzle with additional 2 tablespoons dressing. Top with cheese. Broil until cheese is melted, about 1 minute. Cut sandwiches into pieces; top with fennel fronds.

TOSS arugula with remaining dressing. Serve with sandwiches.

PER SERVING: 664 CALORIES, 39G FAT (12G SAT.), 32MG CHOL., 7G FIBER, 22G PRO., 57G CARB., 1,464MG SOD., 7G SUGAR

THE ROAD TO YOUR HAPPY PLACE IS PAVED WITH RAISINS AND FLAKES.
AND PAVEMENT.
Kellogg's
Raisin Bran

®, TM, © 2016 Kellogg NA Co.

Make It Yourself

A DELICIOUS ESSENTIAL THAT'S BETTER HOMEMADE THAN STORE-BOUGHT. WE'LL PROVE IT. THIS MONTH: CHAI TEA CONCENTRATE

By Ananda Eidelstein

Skip the premade mixes overloaded with sugar or the long line at the coffee shop. This concentrate, made with the simplest ingredients, yields a fragrant and balanced cup right at home. Toasting the spices amps up their warm flavor, while steeping the brew builds depth. If you're craving an extra dose of caffeine at breakfast, stir in some freshly brewed coffee or a shot of espresso. Reach for this homemade chai to warm you up from the inside out all season long.

Photographs by Greg DuPree

ACTIVE TIME **15 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 30 MINUTES**
MAKES **3 CUPS CONCENTRATE**

30	black peppercorns
20	cardamom pods
10	cloves
½	tsp. fennel seeds, chopped
1	3-in. piece fresh ginger, sliced
4	black tea bags (such as English Breakfast)
2	Tbsp. honey or agave syrup
¼	tsp. pure vanilla extract
	Dairy, seed, or nut milk or water, for serving

CRUSH peppercorns, cardamom, and cloves with the back of a knife or a mortar and pestle.

TOAST crushed spices with fennel seeds in a large saucepan over medium, stirring frequently, until fragrant and lightly golden, 3 to 4 minutes. Add 3 cups water and ginger and bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Add tea bags and let steep for 5 minutes. Remove tea bags, gently squeezing to release excess water; discard bags.

STIR in honey and vanilla and let stand for 1 hour. Strain and discard solids.

MIX 1 part milk with 1½ parts concentrate. Serve hot or cold. Concentrate keeps in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

FOOD STYLING BY CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN

PROMOTION

BRIGHT IDEAS

OFFERS EVENTS FINDS GIVEAWAYS

L'ORÉAL PARIS WOMEN of WORTH

WOMEN OF WORTH

Women of Worth is inspired by the L'Oréal Paris belief that "Every Woman is Worth It" and honors the intrinsic beauty and worth of everyday women committing their lives to making a difference. Support the L'Oréal Paris Women of Worth and the 2017 National Honoree. **lorealparisusa.com/women-of-worth**

REAL SIMPLE
REAL SIMPLE
REAL SIMPLE

REAL SIMPLE CLEAN

Breathe easy with innovative cleaning solutions that tackle every type of spill and stain without the use of harsh chemicals. Our line of cleaning products keep your family (and the planet) safer. No matter the mess, we've got the all-natural solution to clean it. **realsimpleclean.com**

ARM & HAMMER
AdvanceWhite
STAIN DEFENSE
Extreme Whitening
Baking Soda & Peroxide

BRIGHTENING YOUR SMILE NEVER FELT SO GOOD

For enamel-safe whitening try ARM & HAMMER™ Advance White™ toothpaste. Naturally powered by Baking Soda, you can feel it working every time you brush for a cleaner, brighter smile.

Find out more at **armandhammer.com**

REAL SIMPLE AT BED, BATH & BEYOND

Organize in style this fall with simple solutions inspired by our editors. From duvets to under-bed storage, Real Simple at Bed, Bath & Beyond has everything you need to put your life in order. Find what you need today in store and online at **bedbathandbeyond.com/realsimple**.

MOEN MATTE BLACK

With clean, simple lines and a stunning finish, our Align faucet in matte black adds a touch of elegance to any room, proving once again that black goes with everything. Explore more at **moen.com/matteblack**.

RS SLEEP—RISE AND (REALLY) SHINE!

Getting the ZZZs you need to wake up refreshed is now easier with REAL SLEEP™ by Real Simple. Our new memory foam mattress provides lasting temperature control to keep you cool all night. Order now and sleep easy with a free 100-night trial. Just go to **realsleep.com**.

Road Test

Ready-to-Serve Soups

THEY'RE WEEKNIGHT SAVIORS AND EASY ON THE WALLET. SO WHICH STORE-BOUGHT SOUPS SHOULD YOU SLURP? WE TASTED MORE THAN 100 TO FIND THE BEST OF THE BUNCH.

By Grace Elkus

Pacific
organic
crème fraîche
Tomato
Soup
USDA ORGANIC
10g PROTEIN
32 FL OZ (1 QT) 946 mL

REALSIMPLE
ROAD TEST

BEST TOMATO

Pacific Foods Organic Crème Fraîche Tomato Soup
This silky-smooth soup, thickened with milk and crème fraîche, is comfort food at its finest. All that's missing is the grilled cheese. **TO BUY:** $6 for 32 oz.; at natural-food stores.

BEST CHICKEN NOODLE

Pacific Foods Organic Chicken Noodle Soup
A classic cure-all that's as good as Grandma's. **TO BUY:** $4.30 for 17.6 oz.; at grocery stores.

BEST BEAN

Progresso Organic Southwest-Style Black Bean Soup
The beans in this hearty mix, unlike the competition, retain their shape and texture when warmed. **TO BUY:** $3 for 14 oz.; at grocery stores.

For five secret-ingredient soups, head to **realsimple.com/secretsoups.**

BEST LENTIL

Amy's Organic Curried Lentil Soup
Split peas, lentils, and mung dal make this a vegetarian favorite. Top with a dollop of yogurt. **TO BUY:** $3.70 for 14 oz.; at grocery stores.

BEST CREAMY

Wickedly Prime Masala Butternut Squash Soup
Supremely satisfying, this puree has just the right touch of heat. **TO BUY:** $19.70 for 6 17-oz. boxes; amazon.com.

BEST WILD CARD

Campbell's Slow Kettle Style Roasted Red Pepper & Smoked Gouda Bisque
This smoky, cheesy blend might have you going back for seconds. **TO BUY:** $3.50 for 15.5 oz.; at grocery stores.

PACKAGED PRODUCT IMAGES COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS

Photograph by Brian Henn

For six three-ingredient cookie recipes that practically make themselves, head to **realsimple.com/easycookies.**

Recipe by Grace Elkus
Photograph by Greg DuPree

FOOD STYLING BY CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLLEN

Big Batch

Break and bake kitchen sink cookies

ACTIVE TIME **20 MINUTES**
TOTAL TIME **1 HOUR, 35 MINUTES** (INCLUDES FREEZING)
MAKES **48 COOKIES**

Nonstick cooking spray
2 cups all-purpose flour
1½ tsp. kosher salt
1½ tsp. baking soda
1½ cups packed light brown sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
¾ cup granulated sugar
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
2 large eggs
2 large egg yolks
1 Tbsp. pure vanilla extract
4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
2 cups mix-ins (such as chopped chocolate, chopped dates, toasted nuts, toasted coconut, etc.)

LINE a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with parchment paper; coat with nonstick cooking spray.

WHISK flour, salt, and baking soda in a medium bowl. Whisk brown sugar, oil, granulated sugar, and melted butter in a large bowl until combined. Add eggs, egg yolks, and vanilla; whisk until smooth. Stir in flour mixture just until combined. Stir in oats and mix-ins.

PRESS dough into prepared dish. Cut into quarters (cutting all the way through to parchment), then make shallow cuts, creating 12 squares in each quadrant (do not cut all the way through).

COVER dish with plastic wrap and freeze until dough is solid, about 1 hour. Unwrap, separate dough quadrants, and place in 4 freezer bags. Stack bags in freezer until ready to use.

TO BAKE, heat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Break dough along scored cuts; place on sheet 2 inches apart. Bake, rotating halfway through, until edges are set and golden but centers are soft, 12 to 14 minutes (cookies will crisp as they cool). Let cool on wire racks.

PER SERVING (1 COOKIE): 179 CALORIES, 10G FAT (3G SAT.), 21MG CHOL., 1G FIBER, 2G PRO., 23G CARB., 106MG SOD., 14G SUGAR

Join the
smart shoppers
and experienced
travelers who have
chosen Caravan
since 1952

Costa Rica

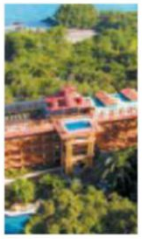
9-Days $1295

Volcanoes, Beaches and Rainforests. Fully guided tour w/ all hotels, all meals, all activities, and a great itinerary.

Your Costa Rica Tour Itinerary

Keel-billed Toucan

Birdwatching



San Bada Hotel; Directly Next to Manuel Antonio National Park

Day 1. Your tour starts in San José, Costa Rica.

Day 2. Explore the Poás Volcano, and view inside the active crater.

Day 3. Visit to a wildlife rescue center.

Day 4. Rio Frio cruise. Enjoy a relaxing soak in volcanic hot springs.

Day 5. Hike the Hanging Bridges, and continue on to the Pacific Coast.

Day 6. Free time at your beach resort and spa.

Day 7. Cruise the Tarcoles River. Birdwatching and crocodile spotting.

Day 8. Explore Manuel Antonio National Park. Enjoy the beach coves.

Day 9. Return with great memories!

Detailed Itinerary at Caravan.com

Choose Your Guided Tour + tax & fees		
Guatemala with Tikal	10 days	$1295
Costa Rica	9 days	$1295
Panama Canal Tour	8 days	$1195
Nova Scotia & P.E.I.	10 days	$1395
Canadian Rockies	9 days	$1695
Grand Canyon & Zion	8 days	$1495
California Coast	8 days	$1595
Mount Rushmore	8 days	$1395
New England, Fall Colors	8 days	$1395

“***Brilliant, Affordable Pricing***”
—Arthur Frommer, Travel Editor

Order Your FREE Brochure
Call 1-800-CARAVAN
Visit Caravan.com

caravan
The #1 In Value

caravan®
Guided Tours Since 1952

Kinky Curly
GO NATURAL

CUTE & CURLY!

Detangle, moisturize & define your toddler's curls with Kinky-Curly Hair Products. Lightweight & non-greasy. Made with all natural ingredients & great for all hair types.

Kinky-Curly
KNOT TODAY
Kinky-Curly
ORIGINAL
CURLING CUSTARD

Available at WHOLE FOODS MARKET and
www.Kinky-Curly.com

T-SHIRT QUILTS
Campus Quilt
We make your t-shirts into a quilt!

-100% Quilted
-Outstanding Quality
-Made from your t-shirts
-Great Prices!

Call today for $10 off!
800-880-8534
www.campusquilt.com/order

How To: Reduce Deep Belly Fat

Doctor reveals how to get rid of deep fat from the body and the at home test to see if you have a fatty liver.

Watch Now at **www.NoFat28.com**

How To: Fix Crepe Skin

Beverly Hills surgeon explains at home fix for crepe skin around the legs, arms, and stomach.

Learn How at www.BHMD70.com

To advertise in Simply Shopping, contact MI Integrated Media at 860.542.5180 • Visit these advertisers online: www.mi-ms.com/simplyshopping

NS CUSTOM CRAFTED SLIPCOVERS

Custom made to fit your furniture from your photos & measurements. Designer styles and washable fabrics at an affordable price. Easy on-line ordering.
Free swatch code RS217

NEEDLE&SHEARS CUSTOM DECOR

877.325.5154 toll free • www.needleandshears.com

The Original, Patented
PeriodPanteez™
just the hug you need™

No more worries, Period!
- Sleek, multi-layered, leak-resistant, eco girl short
- Protect fashion/sheets, ease cramps/bloat, washable
- Worn by celebs, luxury comfort, shapewear support

1-888-878-8364
USA Made www.PeriodPanteez.com
AMERICAN MADE

BEFORE
AFTER
AminoGenesis
e·y·e
CONTROL

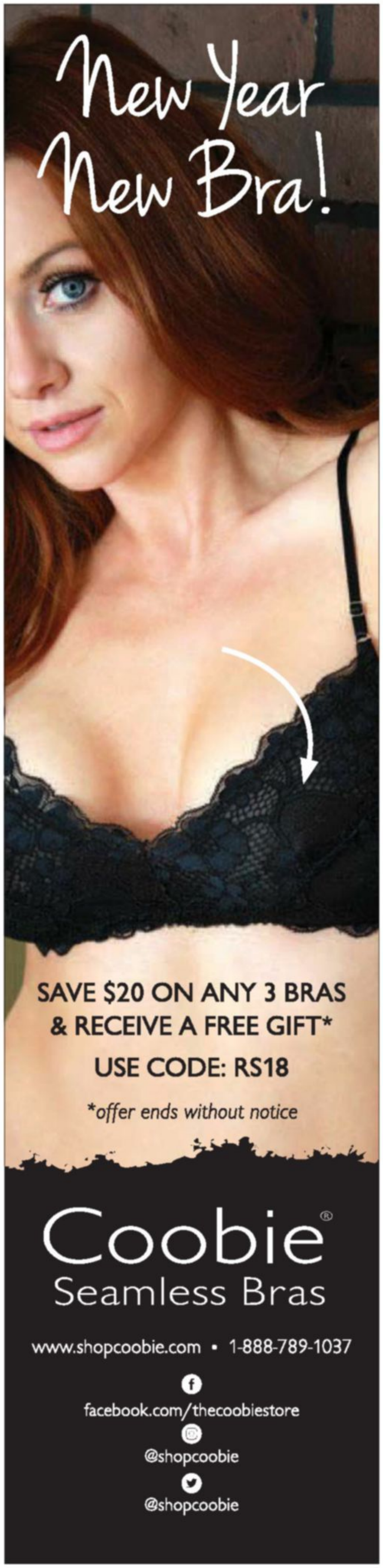
Do You Hate Your Droopy Eyelids?
Get rid of them now! Patented serum from France lifts and tightens droopy eyelids. Stop looking tired, sad or angry because of your eyelids!
Watch Free Video on how eye control works!
www.MyEyeControl.com or call 1.877.523.4455 Discount Code: RSC4

NEED SPACE? DREAM HIGHER!
Unique Custom Bed Solutions. Loft and Bunk Bed Designs for youth, teen, college and adults. Space saving beds in twin, full, queen and king. Visit their website for creative design ideas for sleep, study and storage beds. Solid wood, Ready-To-Assemble and Handcrafted in the USA.
866.739.2331
YouthBedLofts.com/rs

Bare Bottom® Bedding

Sleep Naked

yourbed Byourbed.com/Bare



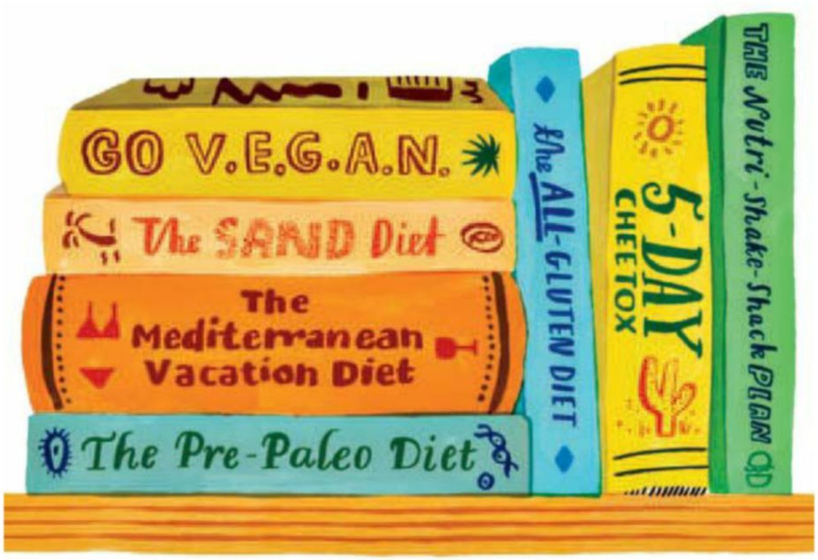
New Year New Bra!

SAVE $20 ON ANY 3 BRAS & RECEIVE A FREE GIFT*
USE CODE: RS18
offer ends without notice

Coobie®
Seamless Bras

www.shopcoobie.com • 1-888-789-1037
facebook.com/thecoobiestore
@shopcoobie
@shopcoobie

To advertise in Simply Shopping, contact MI Integrated Media at 860.542.5180 • Visit these advertisers online: www.mi-rns.com/simplyshopping



The Struggle Is Real

Diets of the Near Future

By Lenore Skenazy

Wondering how to slim down to a size negative 2, 2018's new "it" size? It's easy! Just stop eating for a few weeks. Or just stop eating for one week but spend that week in a raft rushing downriver toward a waterfall, paddling for your life. Bonus: great arms! There are other diet options out there, of course, like the Shredded Cabbage with Cabbage Chunks in a Cabbage Shell Diet or the Cabbage Soup with Raw Cabbage Garnish Regimen. But those are so 2017. Luckily, we managed to sneak a peek at some new diets coming down the pike.

THE PRE-PALEO DIET: Ever watch *The Flintstones?* Cavemen were fat! So why on earth would you eat like them? They were barbecuing bronto burgers every night. No, it's time to start eating like the slim, single-celled organisms that came before the cavemen. They didn't start blimping up to two cells for three billion years. And what did those petite-size organisms eat? That's a question I could not find answered on the internet—even after an intensive five-minute search. So let's just assume they mostly ate Italian food, in microscopic meals throughout the day. You can, too!

THE MEDITERRANEAN VACATION DIET: Look at yourself in the bikini you bought for your vacation on Santorini. You leave in *three weeks*. Keep the bikini on until you board the plane.

THE SAND DIET: No, you don't have to eat sand, silly! Well, not a ton of it. You only have to sprinkle a little of it on your food. In fact, this diet recommends replacing the salt in your shaker with sand, which—talk about a win-win—also helps with hypertension. Watch your weight dwindle away! (Along with, possibly, your teeth, which are just more weight anyway.)

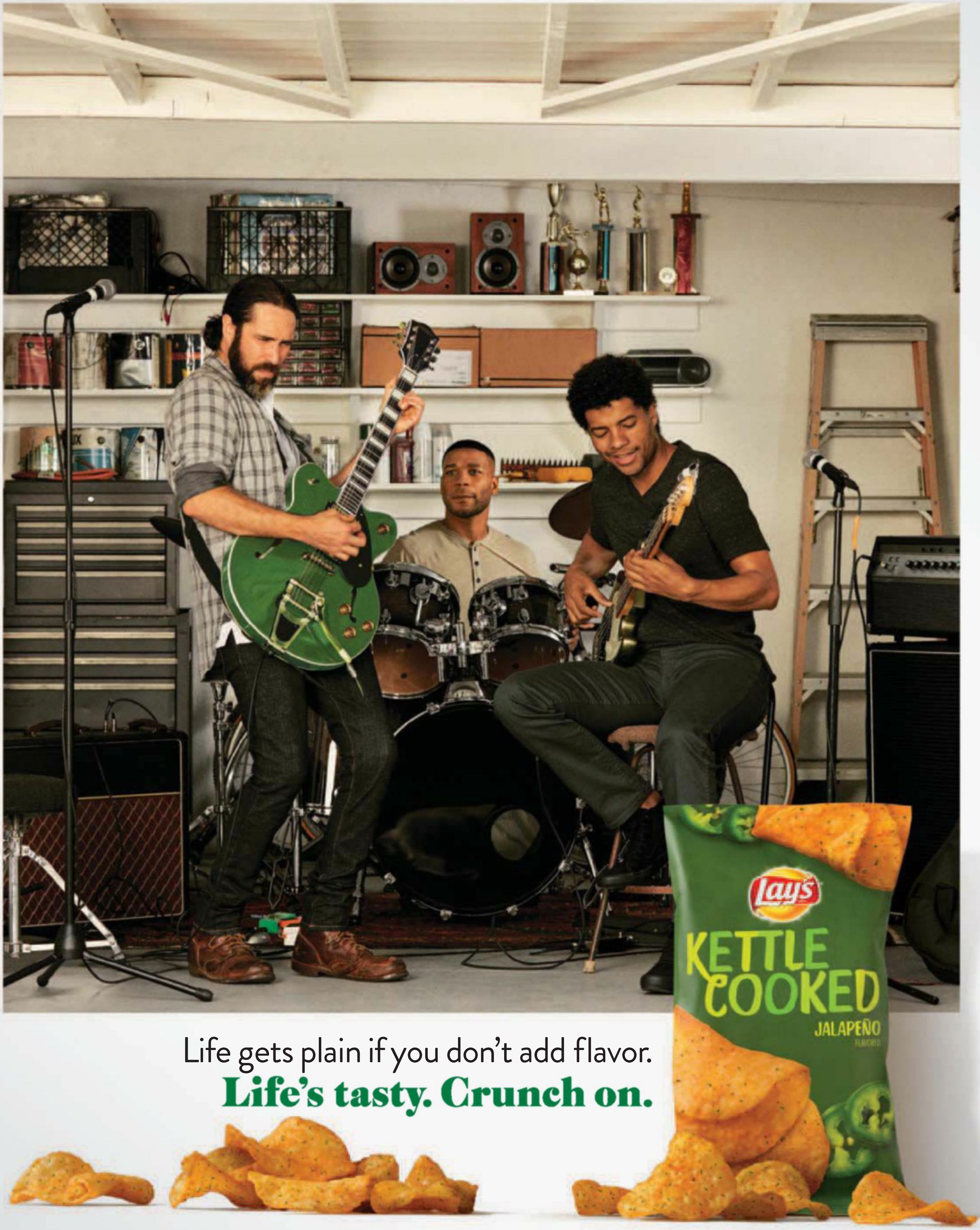
THE NUTRI-SHAKE-SHACK PLAN: No need to deprive yourself of succulent burgers and frozen custard. Just throw them in a juicer and drink as much of the loose brown liquid as you'd like for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

5-DAY CHEETOX: If you want to go on a cleanse but need something to make you thirsty enough to drink wheatgrass juice, you can spend a weekend in the Mojave with nothing but a mason jar of the stuff and a baseball cap. (You don't want your nose to burn.) Or you can try the Cheetox method at home: Eat a giant bag of Cheetos every night just before bed and avoid all liquids. Don't even wash the orange off your fingers. In the morning, drink the wheatgrass juice you brought back from the Mojave.

GO V.E.G.A.N Not vegan. V.E.G.A.N. Repeat after me: vodka, éclairs, ganja, and Nutella. Even if you don't lose weight, who cares? Life is good, and boy, is that wiggly thing in front of you cute! Why not bring it home and make it a little shoebox bed? Oh, wait—it's your hand. Hi, hand! You'll feel pretty damn good for the few moments you are awake and functioning each day.

THE ALL-GLUTEN DIET: Because you know it's coming.

Illustration by Nina Chakrabarti


Lay's
KETTLE COOKED
JALAPEÑO
FLAVORED
Life gets plain if you don't add flavor.
Life's tasty. Crunch on.

Somehow you always turned snow days into warm days.
SAVOR℠
Capital One

Memories are made around meals.
The Savor℠ card makes them more rewarding.

Earn **3%** cash back on dining / **2%** on groceries / **1%** on all other purchases

Capital One®

Credit approval required. Offered by Capital One Bank (USA), N.A. © 2017 Capital One.